

# MENNONITE

## Historical Bulletin

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No. 1

## Rachel Weaver Kreider and the ROTC Controversy at Ohio State University, 1934-35

*As part of the on-going process of integrating the historical activities of the former General Conference Mennonite Church and the Mennonite Church (MC) into the new Mennonite Church USA, we begin with this issue a cooperative effort in publication with Mennonite Life. Published by Bethel College (not by the General Conference or its historical committees), Mennonite Life has been closely associated with the Mennonite Library and Archives and General Conference historical activities. The Mennonite Historical Bulletin was the periodical of the Mennonite Church (MC) Historical Committee and continues as a publication of the Mennonite Church USA Historical Committee. Starting with the December 2002 issue of Mennonite Life and January 2003 issue of Mennonite Historical Bulletin, we plan to publish one joint article per issue in an effort to make each of our readerships more aware of historical publications in the current context. Mennonite Life is published online at <http://www.bethelks.edu/mennonitelife/mlabout.html>*

by James C. Juhnke

On January 12, 1934, when George W. Rightmire, president of Ohio State University, suspended seven conscientious objectors who refused military training, Rachel Weaver Kreider was working on a term paper about "my people, the pacifist Anabaptists."<sup>1</sup> Kreider was a graduate student at OSU, making progress toward a Master of Arts degree in philosophy. Her Mennonite peace convictions drew her into a public protest movement against the university's repressive militarism. The event marked her coming out as one of the early Mennonite women peace activists.<sup>2</sup>

Rachel Weaver had absorbed peace concerns from her parents. She was eight and nine years old during World War I (1917-18) when her father, Sam Weaver, served as a counselor to Amish and Mennonite draft-age young men in Lagrange County, Indiana. Rachel listened intently and stood wide-eyed as her father notarized papers certifying the convictions and church membership of the worried draftees. She was proud that her father knew so much and was so important that people came to him for help. He had been superintendent of the Shipshewana elementary and second-



*Rachel Weaver Kreider, scholar and peace activist, graduated with an MA from Ohio State University, June 1935 (credit: Rachel Weaver Kreider)*

ary schools, but had resigned in 1917, partly for health reasons and perhaps partly because of wartime pressures upon Amish and Mennonite pacifists.<sup>3</sup> This war was serious business.<sup>3</sup>

Rachel's father was also a pastor at the Forks Mennonite Church 1904-16. He had studied at Valparaiso University and had graduated from Goshen College in 1911. A framed copy of his graduation certificate from Goshen hung on the Weavers' living room wall, a sign for Rachel of the importance of higher education. Rachel excelled in elementary and secondary school, and went on to Goshen College herself, graduating in 1931 with a major in Latin. At Goshen she took classes under professors Harold S. Bender (history) and Guy F. Hershberger (sociology), both of whom became prominent Mennonite denominational peace leaders.

While Rachel Weaver was absorbing peace as a core Mennonite value, she and her family were scarred by the church's conservative adherence to separatist practices that the Weaver family considered unimportant. The church enforced a rigid dress code for women, including, at the Forks Church, a rule requiring strings attached to the regulation bonnet. Rachel's mother, Laura Johns Weaver, took off the strings, and the church held her back from communion. When Sam Weaver resigned from the ministry in 1916, he was discouraged with the church's legalism and its opposition to education. In 1923, when a growing Mennonite

cultural crisis led to the closing of Goshen College, Weaver and his family joined a more open and liberal congregation—the Eighth Street Mennonite Church in Goshen.

At Goshen College Rachel met and fell in love with Leonard Kreider, from Wadsworth, Ohio. They delayed marriage because they were poor and the country was in an economic depression. After graduation in 1931, Rachel got a job teaching English and Latin in the small town of Roann, Indiana. Rachel and Leonard were married in the summer of 1933, and began life together in a small attic room near the Ohio State University campus in Columbus. Leonard studied for a Ph.D. in chemistry. Rachel took courses in religion and philosophy. There were about twenty-five Mennonites at OSU.

By the early 1930s, military training had become a bone of contention on university campuses across the nation. The U.S. Congress had encouraged military training in public schools in National Defense Acts of 1916 and 1920. The War Department provided colleges and universities with funds and staff for Reserve Officers' Training Corps. By 1927, eighty-six colleges and universities had mandatory ROTC, and forty-four offered it as an elective. National peace organizations mobilized oppo-

sition to the military training. The Fellowship of Reconciliation led the way with a "Committee on Militarism in Education."<sup>4</sup>

Ohio State University instituted compulsory military training, but exempted members of historic peace churches. The exemption reflected the government's policy for conscientious objectors during World War I. In 1931-33 the number of conscientious objectors at Ohio State University began to increase, a reflection of a growing peace movement throughout the country. Dr. Robert Leonard Tucker, a Methodist pastor in the university district, influenced idealistic young men from his denomination to refuse ROTC. Initially the university administration responded to the growing number of conscientious objectors by extending the exemption to students not from historic peace churches. But by the 1933-34 school year, the number of applicants rose to nearly forty. Administrators thought the situation was getting out of hand. The president instituted a new system for evaluation of the conscientious objectors, substituting a four-hour course on "Preparedness" and two hours of physical education for those judged sincere. On January 12, 1934, seven students judged insincere were notified that they had been suspended from the school.

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**Editor:** John E. Sharp; **Assistant Editor:** Ruth Schrock; **Copy editor:** Catherine Glenn; **Design:** Katie Hershberger; **Contributing editors:** J. Robert Charles, Marlene Epp, Reg Good, Rachel Waltner Goossen, Leonard Gross, Amos B. Hoover, Janeen Bertsche Johnson, Russell Krabill, Glenn M. Lehman, Joseph Liechty, Joseph S. Miller, Levi Miller, Steven Nolt, Erv Schlabach, Jonathan Showalter, Mary Sprunger, Dennis Stoesz, Gerald Studer, Wilmer Swope, Marilyn Helmuth Voran, Franklin Yoder.

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Microfilms of Volumes I-L of the *Mennonite Historical Bulletin* are available from ProQuest Information and Learning, 300 N Zeeb Rd, PO Box 1346, Ann Arbor, MI 48106-1346.

Rachel Kreider was midway through her first year at the university when the seven students were suspended. She became "thoroughly interested" in the controversy. During the following school year she made a point of being "somewhere in the neighborhood when the issue would be raised."<sup>5</sup> She reported that "military propaganda is exceptionally strong here and there are big fat army men all over the place." A Pacifist Club was established on the same day as the suspension of the CO's, and it published several issues of a newsletter, "The Ohio State University Peace News." Roy Zook, secretary of the Pacifist Club, and Kenneth Burkholder, visited Leonard and Rachel and asked whether she could get help from some Mennonite leaders. Zook doubted that the Ohio Mennonite ministers would support the effort. Mennonite leaders wanted their young people to attend Mennonite schools. Some students attended state universities as a way out of the Mennonite community.

In the fall of 1934, Ohio State University announced that no freshmen or sophomore men would be excused from military drill except for physical reasons. The various peace groups, including members of the National Student League (a communist-affiliated organization), attempted to increase their effectiveness by cooperating in an organization called the United Front Committee (UFC). Rachel did not officially join the UFC, but she did show up in October 1934 when the group met with President Rightmire. At that meeting she presented the Mennonite viewpoint. In her words: "I told the president that if our boys are true to the four hundred years of history behind

them they will not bear arms and are therefore barred from a state institution, a rather unjust discrimination against a law-abiding tax-paying people like the Mennonites of Ohio."<sup>6</sup> Rachel was slightly embarrassed when the campus newspaper, *The Lantern*, in reporting the encounter, said that someone had represented the



*Rachel Weaver (Kreider) as a junior at Goshen College, 1929-1930. She had observed her father, Sam Weaver, serving as a counselor to Amish and Mennonite draft-age young men in Lagrange County, Indiana, during World War II.* (credit: Rachel Weaver Kreider)

Mennonites. She had spoken as an individual.

Another focus for peace activist witness was the Ohio state legislature. At the initiative of some church leaders in Ohio, a bill was introduced to make ROTC voluntary in state universities. Students wrote letters to church leaders to mobilize support for the bill. Rachel wrote one letter to Dr. Jacob C. Meyer, a Mennonite professor of history at Western Reserve University in Cleveland. She

hoped Meyer might use his connection with Newton D. Baker, who had been Secretary of War during World War I, and who was now on the Ohio State University board of trustees. At that point, the peace activists were attempting to get the bill sent to the Schools Committee rather than to the Military Affairs Committee, where it would not get support. Rachel also wrote letters to Ohio Mennonite pastors in Bluffton (Irwin W. Bauman), Wadsworth (Wilmer Shelly), Dalton (Austin R. Keiser), and Canton (Otis Johns). Several of these men responded, but not in time to be helpful in the legislative process.

The bill was sent to the Military Affairs Committee, and Rachel attended the hearing when testimony was presented from both sides. She said it was "a most interesting experience." The main witness for the bill was the Methodist pastor, Dr. Tucker. A Quaker and a student representative from the YMCA also spoke. But the peace testimony was overwhelmed by the other side. A former State Commander of the American Legion dramatically accused the students of using the issue "to pump people full of communist propaganda." A Legion Post chaplain railed against the "pseudo-conscientious objectors." The vice president of Ohio State University then "in his calm, serene way surely took the starch out of our side." He said the university was doing what the state legislature wanted, what the university faculty had voted for, and what would contribute most to national defense. The bill died in committee. But the process had contributed greatly to Rachel's education in peace activism.

Rachel was distressed that the various groups and individuals protesting the university policy—Pacifist Club, YMCA, Fellowship of

Reconciliation, communists, and others—had had difficulty cooperating with each other. The attempt to form a United Front Committee failed, in part because the communists were so aggressive that others had trouble working with them. The YMCA decided not to cooperate with the United Front. On November 29, 1934, Rachel wrote a strongly-worded letter to the YMCA leaders, urging them to reconsider their decision. “We never needed union more,” she wrote. “I am sure there is a way to rise above our divisions if we will and we will if we mean what we say.”<sup>7</sup> Later she admitted that she became “a little wiser in knowing how the Communists work.”<sup>8</sup>

On April 12, 1935, students across the country participated in a “strike” against war organized by religious pacifists and left-wing student groups. Some 150,000 students nationwide were involved.<sup>9</sup> At Ohio State University the communist-dominated National Student League took over the demonstration. Their main speaker attacked both American imperialism and the pacifists. A crowd of students, one third of whom were uniformed ROTC men, showed up.<sup>10</sup> The speech prompted loud boos from the ROTC supporters and embarrassment on the

part of the peace groups. Rachel reported, “I never saw so little sense shown, and the *whole* group of pacifists had to bear the brunt of it.”

The peace groups, Communists

excluded, managed to organize another demonstration on May 29, 1935, the day before Decoration Day. President Rightmire had dismissed classes for the holiday. Ernest Fremont Tittle, a prominent Methodist pacifist from Chicago, was

her Master’s oral examination. Despite tension and exhaustion, she passed the exam.

Today we know about Rachel Kreider’s peace activism at Ohio State because her former teacher,

Guy F. Hershberger, was collecting information for the archives at Goshen College about Mennonites and peace. He asked her what had happened in Columbus, and she responded with a seven-page single-spaced letter, along with newspaper clippings, correspondence, and other information. In her letter, Rachel got in a dig at Mennonites who put “bonnet-wearing and pacifism . . . on the same level.” She asked that Hershberger return most of the materials when he was done with them, but he kept them for the archives.<sup>11</sup>

In Rachel’s final year at Ohio State, lack of funds kept her from taking courses toward a Ph.D. degree. While her husband Leonard finished his degree, she worked on a genealogy project to trace both the Weaver and Kreider family lines. By the time Leonard was ready to send his dissertation to the bindery, Rachel also had an impressive manuscript completed. The manuscript began with the term paper on “my people, the pacifist Anabaptists,” and concluded with the genealogy.

They had both documents bound, representing significant achievements by both husband and wife. Later in her career, Rachel Kreider became a distinguished genealogist and church historian, best known for the magisterial work co-authored with Hugh Gingerich, *Amish and Amish Mennonite Genealogies*.<sup>12</sup>



Leonard and Rachel Weaver Kreider on their wedding day, June 20, 1933.  
(credit: Rachel Weaver Kreider)

to address a large outdoor gathering. But it rained hard that day and the meeting was held in University Hall. Rachel was one of five students on the stage but had no role in the program. Later that same day Rachel had

In the midst of her Ohio State peace activism, Rachel wrote an entry in her personal journal reflecting on her personal style and role:

No matter how much I aim to stay quiet and irresponsible I always get myself into some situation eventually where I'm exceedingly busy and trying to push something through and yet never being an obvious member of anything. The latest thing is this matter of compulsory military training.<sup>13</sup>

Rachel Kreider's self-characterization of 1935 applied to her continuing peace work over the next seven decades. She was usually a mover and shaker in secondary roles, as her role as homemaker and mother of three children allowed. At times she hesitantly accepted committee chairmanships. In North Newton, Kansas (1937-49), she chaired for several years the local chapter of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom.<sup>14</sup> In Wadsworth, Ohio, she continued WILPF work, and helped the American Friends Service Committee to start a "pilot project" in community peace organizing that she sustained as secretary over the decades. She served on the Peace Committee of the General Conference Mennonite Church. In Goshen, Indiana (1982- ), she continued a lively interest in world affairs, writing to her representatives in Congress. She attended meetings of the local Seniors for Peace. When President George Bush threatened war against Iraq in the fall of 2002, Rachel Kreider, ninety-three years of age, offered her peace testimony as firmly and passionately as she had at Ohio State University in 1934-35. 

—James C. Juhnke serves as a member of the Mennonite Church USA Historical Committee, and retired recently from teaching history at Bethel College, North Newton,

*Kansas. His latest book is, The Missing Piece, The Search for Nonviolent Alternatives in United States History, published by Pandora Press.*

Notes:

- 1 Rachel W. Kreider, "The Background of Mennonitism in the Reformation." Term paper for History 608 (The Reformation), Ohio State University, March 1934.
- 2 My thanks to Anna Kreider Juhnke and Rachel Weaver Kreider for help in researching and editing this essay.
- 3 Rachel W. Kreider interview with the author, October 15, 2002.
- 4 Charles Chatfield, *For Peace and Justice, Pacifism in America 1914-1941*. (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1971), 152-7.
- 5 Rachel Kreider letter to Guy F. Hershberger, September 28, 1935. Mennonite Church USA Archives-Goshen, Indiana, f. 46, b. 36, Hist. MSS. I-3-5.7.
- 6 *Ibid.*
- 7 Letter from Rachel Kreider to The Y.M.C.A., November 29, 1934.
- 8 Kreider to Hershberger, September 28, 1935.
- 9 Charles DeBenedetti, *The Peace Reform in American History* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1980), 126. Lawrence S. Wittner, *Rebels Against War, The American Peace Movement, 1933-1983* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1984), 6. Wittner reported the number of strikers as 60,000.
- 10 Undated newspaper clipping, "Anti-War Speakers Heckled," probably from *The Columbus Dispatch*, April 13, 1935.
- Mennonite Church USA Archives-Goshen, Indiana, f. 46, b. 36, Hist. MSS. I-3-5.7.
- 11 My thanks to Theron Schlabach who discovered this file in July, 2002, in the course of his research for a biography of Guy F. Hershberger. Schlabach to Juhnke, July 24, 2002.
- 12 Gordonville, PA: Pequea Publishers, 1986.
- 13 Rachel Kreider journal entry, February 27, 1935.
- 14 Kimberly Schmidt, "The North Newton WILPF: Educating for Peace," *Mennonite Life*, December 1985, 8-13.

## Directory of Mennonite and Related Church Historians and Committees

This directory lists North American Mennonite, Amish and related historical committees, societies, conference historians, and interpretation centers. *Mennonite Historical Bulletin* publishes this list annually and would appreciate any updates or corrections from our readers. You will also find this listing on our web site: <http://www.goshen.edu/marchives/directory.html>

**Mennonite Church USA Historical Committee**, John E. Sharp, Director, 1700 S Main St, Goshen, IN 46526, (574) 535-7477, Fax: (574) 535-7756, E-mail: JohnS@MennoniteUSA.org, Web site: <http://www.goshen.edu/marchives>

**Mennonite Church USA Archives**—Goshen, Dennis Stoesz, Archivist, 1700 S Main St, Goshen, IN 46526, Telephone: (574) 535-7477, Fax: (574) 535-7756, E-mail: [archives@goshen.edu](mailto:archives@goshen.edu), Web site: <http://www.goshen.edu/marchives/Archives/GuideAMC.html>

**Mennonite Church USA Archives**—North Newton, John D. Thiesen, Archivist, 300 E 27th St, North Newton, KS 67117, Telephone: (316) 284-5304, Fax: (316) 284-5286, E-mail: [mla@bethelks.edu](mailto:mla@bethelks.edu), Web site: <http://www.bethelks.edu/services/mla/>

**Allegheny Conference Historical Committee**, Mark Moyer, 1000 Vista Dr Apt 922, Davidsville, PA 15928, 814 288-4575; Archives at PO Box 12, Somerset, PA

**Amish & Mennonite Heritage Center**, Paul J. Miller, 5798 County Road 77, PO Box 324, Berlin, OH 44610-0324, 330 893-3192, Fax: 330 893-3529, E-mail: [behalt@sssnnet.com](mailto:behalt@sssnnet.com), Web site: <http://pages.sssnnet.com/behalt>

**Archives of Evangelical Mennonite Conference**, PO Box 1268, Steinbach, MB R0A 2A0

**Atlantic Coast Conference Historian**, Margaret Derstine, 2001 Harrisburg Pike, Lancaster, PA 17601, 717 390-4116

**Bluffton College Archives**, Paul L. Weaver, 280 W College Ave, Bluffton, OH 45817, 419 358-3286, Fax: 419 358-3384,

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# Upon This Rock: the *Geiststein*

by David Rempel Smucker

While visiting Germany in the summer of 2002, I came across a note in a book on local sites of interest in the region of Württemberg.<sup>1</sup> Because the account concerning a large rock described a link to Anabaptists of the 1500s, I became curious. Armed with a train schedule, a good map, and strong hiking boots, I set out to visit this site and learn more about it. Skilled German foresters manage this extensive wooded area in the Schwäbisch-Fränkischer forest with selective cutting, but their activity does not apparently scare away animals, such as owls and deer, which I saw on my pleasant ascent. After some twists and wrong turns and many kilometers, the rock finally came into view amidst hundreds of stately pine trees.

The massive sandstone rock formation, the *Geiststein*, translated in English as “spirit rock,” stands near a quiet and lonely mountaintop in the Welzheimer forest, northeast of Stuttgart. The rock is exposed about fifteen feet on one side and about four feet on the other. From the short side, one can sit on a type of throne-like depression in the top of the rock. As I took a well-deserved rest on this impressive geological formation, only the sound of the gentle wind and birds reached my ears.

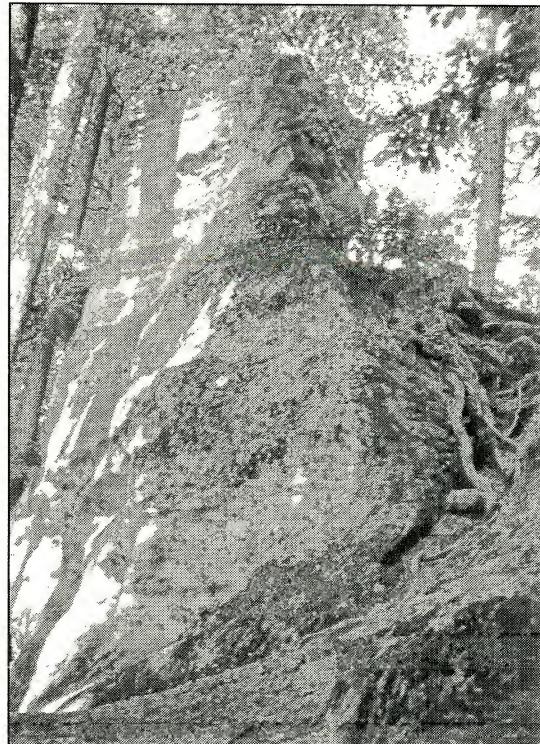
Its setting gives few hints of the significant role the rock played in local history and folklore. Further exploration revealed a small metal plaque, which had been affixed to one side of the *Geiststein*. Set in 1968 by the local Baptist (*Evangelische Freikirchliche Gemeinden*) congregations, in translation, it read: “At this site in 1575 and following years the

Anabaptists gathered from the nearby towns for worship during the night.

They suffered persecution in their struggle for Biblical baptismal truth and freedom of conscience. From the faithful families of the glassmakers named Greiner of Walkersbach, the leaders of this Anabaptist movement are mentioned in documents.”

Further research in various sources reveals a fascinating story. The Anabaptist Greiners, a clan of three generations associated with this area, are noted in various writings on sixteenth-century Anabaptism, including those of the late John Oyer of Goshen College.<sup>2</sup> To highlight a few facts, brothers Blasius and

Andreas Greiner were masters of the glassworks in Walkersbach. Tradition has it that they converted to Anabaptism in 1562 through night preaching at the *Geiststein*, where Anabaptists worshipped in secret. The Greiners drew many people from their community into Anabaptism. From 1567 to 1569 the authorities imprisoned Blasius Greiner in Maulbronn, a former monastery that had been turned into a prison. He escaped by cutting the iron bars but was again captured. He recanted his Anabaptist convictions, then retracted the recantation. At some point in time before 1584 the account states that the Greiner brothers actually destroyed the church building in Walkersbach because they disagreed with the preaching there.<sup>3</sup>



*The Geiststein, translated in English as “spirit rock,” stands near a quiet and lonely mountaintop in the Welzheimer forest, northeast of Stuttgart. (credit: David Rempel Smucker)*

So intense was the “heretical” Anabaptist movement in this region that a special theological examination was held in 1598 to attempt to identify Anabaptists.<sup>4</sup> The authorities found fourteen self-confessed Anabaptists, twenty-seven suspected ones, and eleven people who sheltered them. From 1570 to 1620 about sixty-nine Anabaptists from the Urbach and Walkersbach area migrated to Moravia, where they joined the Hutterites.<sup>5</sup> Although not all left for Moravia, the remaining Anabaptists either migrated to other regions or their children did not remain Anabaptists. In 1644 the last Anabaptist was documented in that region. No Anabaptist congregations are continuous from that time period

of sustained persecution.

Further research on this site uncovered legends that the *Geiststein* served as a cultic site for pre-Christian Teutonic tribes.<sup>6</sup> In the 1700s and 1800s the nobility used the rock as a focus of their hunting parties. Legend has it that around 1800 the *Kurfürst* King Friedrich of Württemberg used the *Geiststein* as a hunting “throne.” He would sit in the rock depression with his gun and shoot the wild pigs, which his assistants would drive into his line of fire.<sup>7</sup>

This visit to such an authentic site out of our Anabaptist past initiated some reflection. I tried to imagine staying in the forest during the entire night, as the harried Anabaptists did. The rock could provide a focal point, a place of “spirit” shelter and security for a group. If Mennonites and Amish in North America lived in a persecuted and underground church, where would we gather for worship and fellowship? Not in air-conditioned rooms of an urban conference facility. Not in a plain Old Order meeting-house. Probably not even in houses and barns, as the Amish do. Perhaps at that rocky outcrop in an Iowa field where the soil is too poor to farm. Perhaps in the unused part of the New York City subway system.

Perhaps in the middle of a very sparsely populated U. S. state—North Dakota, for example. North of its 55th parallel, Canada has many wonderfully inaccessible locations, if we would just have the faith and skill to withstand the elements.

However, in our age of video and electronic surveillance, cell phones, global positioning systems (GPS), and airplane reconnaissance, I suspect that an underground church in North America would struggle even more than in sixteenth-century Europe. Would our faith testimony elicit any sympathizers, Christians or non-Christians, who would be willing to hide and protect us? Would a Mennonite recant and give the police the GPS location of worship sites?

Perhaps we should not further pursue such speculation on the future. When we study the church’s past and present, we may learn at least one lesson: Be Prepared. The people of God have no guaranteed insurance policy against the vicissitudes of cultural, political, and environmental change. The situation of religious freedom and economic security in which many North American Anabaptists find themselves could reverse in a few years. We need the equivalent of the *Geiststein*, a “spirit rock,” where we can gather in the night to commune

together and worship God in Christ. My visit to this site, a metaphorical bridge to the sixteenth century, did not show me exactly where such a physical place could or should be for the twenty-first century. It did help remind me that believers with Jesus Christ as their theological *Geiststein* need to be prepared for sacrifice. ♫

—David Rempel Smucker is a genealogist, editor of the Pennsylvania Mennonite Heritage, Managing Editor of the Mennonite Sources and Documents Series, and is on the staff of the Lancaster Mennonite Historical Society.

#### Notes

<sup>1</sup> Eva Walter und Thomas Pfündel, *Vom Taubergrund zum Bodensee: Bilder, Berichte, Geschichten aus dem Wandergebiet des Schwäbischen Albvereins* (Stuttgart: Verlag des Schwäbischen Albvereins, 1988), p. 67.

<sup>2</sup> John S. Oyer, “They Harry the Good People Out of the Land”: Essays on the Persecution, Survival and Flourishing of Anabaptists and Mennonites, ed. by John D. Roth (Goshen, Ind.: Mennonite Historical Society, 2000), pp. 42-43. “Nicodemites Among Württemberg Anabaptists,” *Mennonite Quarterly Review* 71:4 (Oct. 1997): 502-505. See also *Mennonite Encyclopedia*, s.v. “Greiner, Blasius,” and *Mennonitisches Lexikon*, s.v. “Greiner, Blasius.” Walther Pfeilsticker, *Neues Württembergisches Dienerbuch*, Volume 1 (Stuttgart: J.G. Cotta’sche Buchhandlung, n.d.), “Glashütten,” has a list of glass masters with 16 Greiners noted.

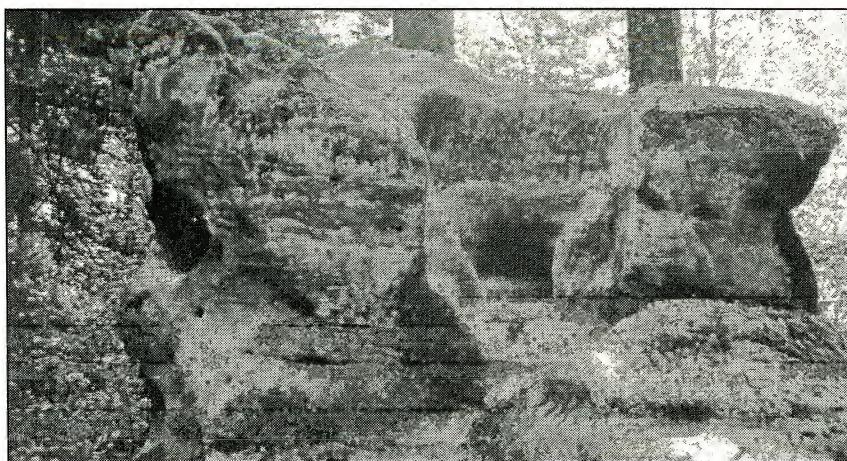
<sup>3</sup> Uwe Jens Wandel, et al., *Achthundert Jahre Urbach: Aus der wechselvollen Geschichte einer Remstalgemeinde* (Stuttgart: Wogra Verlagsgesellschaft, 1981), p. 57, which is from a small section (pp. 56-58) entitled “Die Wiedertäufer in Urbach.”

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>6</sup> Emil Kost, “Der Geiststein bei Walkersbach,” in W. Böhringer, *Aus der Vergangenheit von Urbach* (Schorndorf: Familienarchiv Hornschuch, n.d.), p. 176. Walter und Pfündel, *Vom Taubergrund zum Bodensee*, p. 67.

<sup>7</sup> Kost, “Der Geiststein,” pp. 177-178.



The *Geiststein*, a place of worship for persecuted Anabaptists. (credit: David Rempel Smucker)

# Discovering John Howard Yoder, a Genius Too Relevant to Dismiss

by Laura Yoder

Since June, I have spent my hours sifting through the papers of John Howard Yoder, one of the Mennonite church's best minds and one of theology's finest proponents of peace. His collection—published and unpublished papers, research and lecture notes, letters, schedules, and a walking stick—is stored at the Mennonite Church USA Archives—Goshen in over 170 boxes, and there are more coming. His long career and wide interests, combined with a propensity for saving the thousand picayune germane to each project, make for a rather unwieldy collection. The inventory makes navigation through all of it a bit easier.

Each box is its own small collection, often containing a cross-section of Yoder's research, correspondence, and thought development on a variety of topics and issues. His wife, Annie, and their daughter, Elisabeth, sort through the piles still in his basement office; basic lists of contents are made, and the papers are deposited in the archives and later inventoried in more detail. Sometimes Yoder has files already in the boxes; in other cases, piece by piece means page by page. Each section or pile of loose papers is then given a reference number, a short description and, if possible, a key phrase linking that individual file to others on the same subject elsewhere in Yoder's collection. Because the papers are as Yoder left them, and not arranged by topic, chronology, or type, recurring themes must be connected via the inventory. While leaving the papers as they are presents obstacles from the organizational point of view, the preservation of that order gives insight into Yoder's thought processes.

Yoder was better than most at untangling, without oversimplifying, terribly complex problems. He worked with issues and ideas that were and are, for him and the church, rooted in spiritual knowledge and Biblical teaching. Yet, because of his personality and gifts, Yoder pushed beyond that first circle of faith-based understanding. As a systematic theologian, he drew on his intellect to understand questions of faith through logic and so make them relevant for people of other backgrounds, as well as illuminating recurrent issues imbedded in his own. Though a broad idea such as peace may be threaded through history and certainly present in contemporary thought, Yoder recognized the importance of making such perennial ideas applicable to very current, often volatile, dilemmas. *The Politics of Jesus*, perhaps Yoder's most widely known book, published in 1972, illustrates his ideas about the importance of finding, in our culture, a place for a two thousand year old message of peace and freedom.

There is no central thesis to the inventory—I am not trying to isolate coherent themes, shuffling papers into prepared categories. Rather, I focus on the specific—the pile of lecture notes, the names on the letters, the central argument of a long memo to colleagues. As more and more files are described and named, one can

look back through the inventory and begin to pick out patterns of thought. Some are obvious: peace, war, the identity of the Mennonite church, and so on. But within those topics are strata that lie in every direction:

peace and logic,  
peace in domestic  
issues such as capital  
punishment, peace in  
Anabaptist history,  
origins of concepts of  
peace. These are all  
knit together, even as  
they are separate  
ideas, so that one  
belief is informed by  
another opinion, one  
answer containing  
another question.  
Yoder traced prob-  
lems to a logical ori-  
gin, articulating pos-  
sible explanations and  
ways to address them.



Laura Yoder

This approach seems rare in these days of speculation and hyper-media. Yoder gathered information and thought deeply about an issue, drawing on his own strong beliefs as well as information he collected for other issues. At times, the collection seems to resemble a giant spider web with no definite center; each box positions Yoder's mind on another thread of that web, following the crooked trail from the edges of one problem to its heart, only to locate in that problem another trail, leading to another center of thought. One does not emerge from these tangles satisfied, answered—indeed, one does not really emerge at all. Rather, by grasping how one problem is connected to another and how each answer, in part, the other's question, Yoder traded a straight, doctrinal answer for an understanding of the interrelated ram-

ifications of belief, opinion, or action.

While Yoder was certainly aware of the esoteric web of dilemmas and beliefs, his collection also belies interconnection on a more personal level. Letters and memos fill an important space in the collection; Yoder saved correspondence dealing with everything from grave treatments of ministerial problems to a friendly Christmas card from friends in Indonesia. To me, a recent graduate of Goshen College, Yoder represents a time of concerted intellectual growth within the Mennonite Church; I read correspondence to and from men whose names, like

Yoder's, seem legendary, like old baseball players or former presidents—Guy F. Hershberger, Harold S. Bender, Ross T. Bender, J.C. Wenger, and many others. A student and then colleague of these men, Yoder echoed their beliefs, built on their ideas, and furthered theology according to his own interpretation of past teachings. Though Yoder's opinion of the Mennonite church was not always the highest, it is apparent from his life's work and from the lively correspondence in this collection that he stayed firmly rooted in the Anabaptist ideology of his heritage. In the 1950s, early in his career, Yoder produced letters, articles, and memos exploring the basic tenets of recent Mennonite theology. He revised the vision, describing what he saw as the basic tenets of future Mennonite theology; he did not espouse rigid doctrine but laid out and defended a logical argument for implementing the beliefs of the early church—both Christian and Anabaptist—in the Mennonite church, mid-twentieth century. As he established his position in academia and in the Mennonite theological milieu, Yoder wrestled with the tension inherent in the relationship between church and secular society. One of the main points of difference

between the Mennonite church and the governments of its many followers over the years has been the issue of war.

Drawing on the early Anabaptists' vision for a nonresistant church that echoes the earliest Christian doctrines, Yoder applied his genius to understanding the constant conflict between Jesus' calling to peace and nonresistance, and the human and political tendencies towards violence. His papers on the war in Vietnam, for instance, show great emotional concern but do not allow this to be the means by which he understands the problem; rather, Yoder sought to real-

*To me, a recent graduate of Goshen College, Yoder represents a time of concerted intellectual growth within the Mennonite Church; I read correspondence to and from men whose names, like Yoder's, seem legendary, like old baseball players or former presidents—Guy F. Hershberger, Harold S. Bender, Ross T. Bender, J.C. Wenger, and many others.*

ize the Anabaptist vision even in sticky political situations where peace does not seem a viable—or sensible—option. He did not generalize ideas of peace into some impossible goal; rather, he broke it apart, separating and defining positions such as nonviolence and nonresistance within the context of Jesus' teachings as well as an academic theological setting. In a lecture titled "The Lessons of Nonviolent Experience," written for War, Peace and Revolution, which Yoder taught for years at both Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries and Notre Dame University, he points out the logical errors in positions that allow war as a last resort. He writes that the discussion between pacifists and non-pacifists "as it wrestles with the impossibility of saying that nonviolence will usually or always work, and what difference that would make for moral evaluation, largely set aside the obvious point that military means as well

fail most of the time to reach the goals they promise, and that usually their failure is more costly not only to the oppressors or aggressors one seeks to restrain but also (and in fact usually predominantly) to those victims one claims to be defending." In this, and many other works, Yoder demands that the pacifist position be understood through logic, that the same assumptions allowed for violence be granted to a peaceful response.

Peacemaking continues to be a terribly relevant topic; as our country fights one war and prepares for another, as violence on a smaller

scale disrupts daily life in countless regions around the world, Yoder's clear-headed defense of pacifism only gains significance. His lucidity of thought was not eclipsed but augmented by his strong beliefs. In the same lecture as quoted above, he writes, "If we hear it argued that organized military force will achieve cer-

tain desirable goals, the alternative against which we should test it is not doing nothing, or some improvised nonviolent gesture, but rather what could be done if the same amount of creativity, the same funds, the same advanced institutional planning, the same strategy thinking, etc., were invested in the nonviolent reaction as are currently being invested in preparations for war." In this, I think he left a challenge for those whose values are likewise rooted in pacifist teachings to work towards understanding and thoughtful analysis of issues so that they might be addressed with the same clarity and forcefulness Yoder brought to his theology.

As I shuffle through Yoder's papers, I learn—about pacifism, about theology, about the man himself. It is strange, in some ways, to spend so much time with materials left by a person I never knew. People tell me

stories about him—his intelligence, his social quirks, his ability to articulate not only an answer or explanation, but also clarify the question itself. It is clear, especially in his correspondence, Yoder knew his own mind; though he did not, by any means, live in a matter-of-fact world, he went about living in a very matter-of-fact way. Perhaps that, more than anything, is what I find fascinating about Yoder—his talent for analyzing unruly situations and esoteric ideas with a straightforwardness that explained, but did not diminish, the complexity of the problem, the beauty of the argument.

There is more to Yoder than logical gymnastics, however. I enjoy getting in through the back door on a few of his classes, studying his response to Just War theorists or the Persian Gulf War. I am curious as to what he might have said about the current war against terrorism the United States is currently spearheading. I have learned from him how to navigate a little better the tricky road of peace. Perhaps my generation, young adults in these strained times, would do well to study Yoder's structure of thought and belief, arguing so forcefully for peace. To be sure, he represents the ivory tower of academia and enjoyed the more subtle privilege of being a white male. But his ideas, his arguments, and his genius are too important, too relevant, to dismiss.

The collection of Yoder's papers will take months to organize; there are superfluous documents to be culled, fragments to be pieced together into a coherent whole. But its contents as a whole leave no doubt that Yoder's ideas should not be described and stored in silence, but studied, implemented, and furthered. ¶

*—Laura E. Yoder, originally of Kalona, Iowa, is a 2002 graduate of Goshen College with a B. A. in English. At the archives, she has become so absorbed in the past that her plans for the future are quite ambiguous.*

## Mennonite Mirth: It's All in a Name!

by Jep Hostetler

A friend of mine recently asked me if I had heard about the new merger. "You mean the integration of the GC's and MC's in U.S. into one Mennonite Church USA?" I queried. "No," he replied, "the merger of FedEx and UPS". He went on to explain the frustrations people are expressing regarding so many UPS and FedEx trucks on the road. The new company is simply called FED-UP.

With the merger-transformation-integration-fusion of the MC's and GC's, is it any wonder that there are fusions of names that sometimes bring about interesting combinations. True, MBM and COM are now part and parcel of MMN. However, in my mind, saying MMN out loud does not fall off the lips as easily as COM or MBM.

The enrichment of Mennonite churches around the world has been going on for years, with new and wonderful people from all kinds of religious backgrounds. What strikes me as interesting is the trend toward blending of names. When couples decide to get married, announce their engagement, and set the date for the wedding, they also decide who is going to take on whose name. Or, will they hyphenate their last names? Or perhaps each will take on a new middle name with the bride being the one to take on the groom's last name, while the groom takes on the bride's last name as his middle name, or some combination of this arrangement.

This blending brings about some creative last names. For example, what if Shirley Fender, from San Francisco, marries Charles Bender from

Bluffton? You would have Shirley and Charles **Fender-Bender**. Or perhaps Melonie Schwartztruber marries Nathan Neuenschwander and you get Melonie and Nathon **Schwartztruber-Neuenschwander**.

**Neuenschwander**. In a similar vein, one could conceive of Henry Harder marrying Fanny Friesen and you would get Fanny and Henry **Friesen-Harder**. Or if a Short woman marries a Long man you would have a **Long-Short** or a **Short-Long**, depending upon which of the partners has the strongest personality.

To take this to its fullest potential, it would be possible for a **Short-Long** to marry a **Fender-Bender** and you would have a **Short-Long-Fender-Bender**. Possibilities are unlimited when one considers the wide variety of names in Mennonite Church USA. Everything from **Nicely-Dunn** to **Coyvenhoven-Hostetler** would enrich our membership rolls.

I can see the *Mennonite Weekly Review* headlines now: Susan **Short-Fender** emerges as the new leader in the Mennonite Church USA, replacing Lowell **Long-Bender** in 2006. It's possible! ¶

*—Jep Hostetler, Columbus, Ohio, is a humorist and, an associate professor emeritus at the Ohio State University College of Medicine. He and his wife Joyce serve as staff persons for the Mennonite Medical Association.*

# Thiesen creates web site of *Martyrs Mirror* illustrations



A Luiken (Luyken) etching: Crucifixion of Apostle Peter, Rome.

Bethel College archivist John D. Thiesen has created a web site containing scanned versions of all 104 of the Jan Luiken illustrations from the 1685 edition of the *Martyrs Mirror*. The site is available at <http://www.bethelks.edu/services/mla/images/martyrsmirror>.

"The *Martyrs Mirror* is one of the classics of Mennonite literature," says Thiesen who is director of the Mennonite Library and Archives and co-director of libraries at Bethel College. "The 104 illustrations in the 1685 Dutch edition are well known. One of the most familiar is the image of Dirk Willems rescuing his pursuer from an icy waterway. The Dirk Willems image (see book 2, p. 387) has become a Mennonite icon in the last several decades."

Thiesen explains that until now, in the midst of rapidly growing collections of on-line reference informa-

tion, there has not been a web site showing all of the illustrations together. This new site includes a full-screen view of each illustration with a brief caption.

The site is intended as a reference and as a way to get an overview of the whole set of illustrations together. The scans were made from an original 1685 edition and show some of the variations and anomalies found in seventeenth-century printing. So far, however, no one has made available the full text of the *Martyrs Mirror* on-line, either in English or the original Dutch. 

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E-mail: [weaverp@bluffton.edu](mailto:weaverp@bluffton.edu)

**Brethren in Christ Historical Library and Archives**, Dori I. Steckbeck, Director, One College Ave, PO Box 3002, Grantham, PA 17027, 717 691-6048, Fax: 717 691-6042, E-mail: [archives@messiah.edu](mailto:archives@messiah.edu)

**Brethren in Christ Historical Society**, E. Morris Sider, Executive Director, PO Box 10, Grantham, PA 17027, 717 766-7767, Fax: 717 691-6042

**California Mennonite Historical Society**, Peter J. Klassen, 4824 E Butler, Fresno, CA 93727, 209 453-2225, E-mail: [kennsrem@fresno.edu](mailto:kennsrem@fresno.edu), Web site: <http://www.fresno.edu/affiliation/cmhs>

**Casselman River Area Historians**, David I. Miller, PO Box 591, Grantsville, MD 21536, 301 895-4488

**Center for Mennonite Brethren Studies**, 1717 S Chestnut Ave, Fresno, CA 93702, 209 453-2225, Fax: 209 453-2124, E-mail: [kennsrem@fresno.edu](mailto:kennsrem@fresno.edu), Web site: <http://www.fresno.edu/affiliation/cmbs>

**Center for Mennonite Brethren Studies**, Peggy Goertzen, Center for MB Studies, Tabor College, Hillsboro, KS 67063, 316 947-3121, Fax: 316 947-2607

**Central District Conference Historical Committee**, Gordon Oyer, 110 Flora Dr, Champaign, IL 61821-3215, 217 398-0914, E-mail: [goyer@oba.uiuc.edu](mailto:goyer@oba.uiuc.edu)

**Central Plains Mennonite Conference Historian**, Barb Troyer, 1001 8<sup>th</sup> Ave, Wellman, IA 52356, 319 646-2151

**Centre for Mennonite Brethren Studies (Canada)**, Abe Dueck, director, 1-169 Riverton Ave, Winnipeg, MB R2L 2E5, 204 669-6575, Fax: 204 654-1865, E-mail: [adueck@mbconf.ca](mailto:adueck@mbconf.ca), Web site: <http://www.mbconf.ca/mbstudies/>

**Conference of Mennonites in Alberta**, Henry D. Goerzen, Box 7, Site 18, RR 1, Didsbury, AB T0M 0W0, 403 335-8414, E-mail: [justpen@csdivision.com](mailto:justpen@csdivision.com)

**Conference of Mennonites in British Columbia Archives**, 303-32025 Dahlstrom Ave, Clearbrook, BC V2T 2K7, 604 850-6658, Fax: 604 850-9372, E-mail: [cminbc@uniserve.com](mailto:cminbc@uniserve.com)

**Conservative Mennonite Conference Historical Committee**, Elmer S. Yoder, 1136 S Prospect Ave, Hartville, OH 44632-8708, 330 877-9566

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# Historic Germantown Homecoming

by Leonard Gross

The Germantown Mennonite Historic Trust held a homecoming weekend October 18-20 to celebrate its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of ownership of the historic Germantown Mennonite meetinghouse and its witness of “Preserving a heritage . . . Telling a story.” Close to one hundred persons came for the weekend to reflect on the meaning of Germantown and the place it holds in the faith and heritage of all North American Mennonites. The program committee led by Phil Weber in cooperation with the Randy Nyce, the new executive director, planned the weekend.

In the late 1940s the Germantown Mennonite congregation was down to a handful of aging members. Fearing that if the congregation died out, the historic Germantown meetinghouse might fall into non-Mennonite hands, Walter Temple, a prominent member of the congregation, approached the Historical Committee of the General Conference Mennonite Church asking that the General Conference take ownership of the building. The conference executive committee agreed to do so and authorized the historical committee to form a Board for that purpose.

In 1951 a board was formed with representatives from the General Conference, the Eastern District and the congregation. In 1952 the charter was amended to create the corporation known today as the Germantown Mennonite Historic Trust. Because of this action the 1770 Germantown Mennonite meetinghouse remains in its historic significance as the symbol of North American Mennonitism for all Mennonites living in the New World.

The board met for its annual meeting on Friday afternoon, October 18.



*Jim King, chair of GMHT Board, Mary Lou Roush (daughter of Stanley R. Fretz), and J. Herbert Fretz (brother of Stanley R. Fretz and former member of GMHT board) during the unveiling on October 18 of a bronze plaque identifying the Stanley R. Fretz Center, located adjacent to the historic Meetinghouse. (Credit: Randy Nyce)*

Following that they held the ceremonial unveiling of a bronze plaque, marking the six-apartment building alongside the meetinghouse, as the Stanley R. Fretz Center. Stanley Fretz joined the Board in 1962, serving energetically as its chairman for thirty years, and was instrumental in developing the campus of buildings around the meetinghouse. Fretz’s daughter, Mary Lou Fretz Roush, attended the unveiling and spoke of her father as a warmly human and humorous person.

A Friday evening dinner for current and past board members was a time of reminiscing and honoring past board members. Walter Temple and his sister, Eleanor, both deceased, were long-time active members in the congregation and served on the board in its earlier years. Among former board members present who shared memories were J. Herbert Fretz, brother of Stanley, who served seventeen years from the board’s beginning

in 1951, and Mahlon Hess, one of the first to represent the Mennonite Church, who also served seventeen years beginning in 1971. The Mennonite Church and the Franconia Conference became part of the trust in 1970, in partial fulfillment of another of Stanley Fretz’s dreams that the Germantown meetinghouse belongs to all North American Mennonites.

Also remembered were historian Melvin Gingerich, who spent nine months in Germantown in 1971-72, laying the foundation for the program and mission of Germantown; and former administrators/executive directors, Roman and Marianna Stutzman, Robert Ulle, Marcus Miller and Galen Horst-Martz.

Saturday a steady stream of people came to tour the meetinghouse and other historical sites in Germantown and to attend the four workshops. Mary Jane Hershey, noted fraktur his-

torian, gave a presentation on "Christopher Dock in Germantown, Skippack and Salford." Though best known for his work at Skippack and Salford, Dock also taught several summers in Germantown. Jan Gleysteen, well-known artist, historian and writer gave a presentation on "Mennonite Meetinghouse Architecture," focusing first on European meetinghouses and than on those built in the New World, of which the Germantown meetinghouse is one of the earliest examples.

In the afternoon, Mary Sprunger, associate professor of history at Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, VA, spoke about her ongoing studies of Dutch and Lower Rhine Anabaptism and its connection with the Germantown settlement. Leonard Gross, historian and writer on Anabaptist, Hutterite, Amish and Mennonite themes, spoke about "Mennonites and Urbanism," pointing out the urban beginnings of Anabaptism in Zurich, Switzerland, and other examples of urban Mennonitism through the centuries, of which Germantown has been an

urban phenomenon in the United States since its beginning in 1683.

The highlight of the afternoon was the keynote address by Dr. Leroy Hopkins, professor of German at Millersville (PA) University. With deep interest in the interaction of Africans and Germans in Europe, Africa and the New World, he spoke on "Uneasy Neighbors: African Americans and Germans in Colonial America." He noted that the 1688 protest against slavery, written only five years after the Germantown settlers arrived, was Mennonite in spirit and substance. Though the writers were at that time Quaker, they had been Mennonite and their Mennonite roots were evident in the protest. The Philadelphia Mennonite High School choir, directed by Wendell Holmes, sang following his presentation.

Completing the afternoon was the ceremonial transfer of the Johnson House to the recently formed Johnson House Historic Site Board. The Johnson House is one of the few documented Underground Railroad sites from the 1850s and the only one in

Philadelphia in nearly original condition and open to the public. The Johnson House was built for the Johnsons, a Quaker family, in the 1760s by a Mennonite, Jacob Knorr, who also built the meetinghouse. It has been owned by Germantown Mennonite Historic Trust since 1980.

At the closing session Sunday afternoon, Jan Gleysteen made a slide presentation entitled "Anabaptist History: Pre and Post Germantown." He examined the migrations from Europe to the New World beginning with the presence of Mennonites in New Amsterdam (New York), the ill-fated utopian colony of Pieter Cornelisz Plockhoy, the story of Germantown and successive migrations west. The afternoon ended with a recognition and reception to honor Galen Horst-Martz for his recently concluded twelve years of service as executive director of the trust.

Germantown was the first and, for two centuries, the only urban Mennonite congregation in the United States. The Germantown meetinghouse, though no longer used by the congregation, stands as the site of the oldest Mennonite congregation in the country and as a forerunner of how Mennonites would eventually move from being the "quiet in the land" to being a vital witness, both rural and urban, to the message of Christ that is the faith and heritage of all Mennonites. As it looks to the future the Germantown Mennonite Historic Trust is committed to being a part of that witness. 

*—Leonard Gross is a long-time member of the GMHT board, and is the retired director of the Historical Committee and Archives of the Mennonite Church.*



Representatives of the Johnson House Historic Site Board (l to r: Najah Palm, Eric Smith, Evelyn Byrd Felder, Phinorice Boldin, and Mary Lawton) to whom ownership of the Johnson House was ceremoniously transferred on October 19 during the Homecoming, with Chairman Jim King (far right), representing the Germantown Mennonite Historic Trust. (Credit: Randy Nyce)

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- Delaware Mennonite Historical Association**, PO Box 238, Greenwood, DE 19950
- Essex-Kent Mennonite Historical Association**, 31 Pickwick Dr, Leamington, ON N8H 4T5, 519 322-0456, E-mail: [freebru@wincom.net](mailto:freebru@wincom.net)
- Franconia Historical Society**, Jacob Kratz, president, 430 Main St, Harleysville, PA 19438, 610 584-5536, E-mail: [jacobkratz@msn.com](mailto:jacobkratz@msn.com)
- Freeman Academy Heritage Archives**, Cleon Graber, 748 S Main St, Freeman, SD 57029, 605 925-4237
- Germantown Mennonite Historic Trust**, Randall Nyce, 6133 Germantown Ave, Philadelphia, PA 19144, 215 843-0943, Fax: 215 843-6263, E-mail: [gmh@aol.com](mailto:gmh@aol.com)
- Hanover-Steinbach Historical Society**, Delbert Plett, PO Box 1960, Steinbach, MB R0A 2A0, 204 326-6454
- Hans Herr House Museum**, Douglas J. Nyce, 1849 Hans Herr Dr, Willow Street, PA 17584, 717 464-4438, Web site: <http://www.hansherr.org>
- Heritage Historical Library**, David Luthy, 52445 Glencolin Line, RR 4, Aylmer, ON N5H 2R3
- Historical Center, The**, J. Lloyd Gingrich, PO Box 81, Richfield, PA 17086, 717 694-3482
- Howard-Miami Counties Heritage Society Inc.**, PO Box 156, Greentown, IN 46936, 765 628-2280
- Illinois Amish Interpretive Center**, Conrad Wetzel, 111 S Locust St, PO Box 413, Arcola, IL 61910, 217 268-3599, 888 45AMISH, E-mail: [iaic@one-eleven.net](mailto:iaic@one-eleven.net), Web site: <http://www.amishcenter.com>
- Illinois Mennonite Conference Historical Committee**, Edwin J. Stalter, PO Box 576, Flanagan, IL 61740-0576, 815 796-2918
- Illinois Mennonite Historical and Genealogical Society**, Carolyn Nafziger, Mennonite Heritage Center, PO Box 1007, Metamora, IL 61548, 309 367-2551 or 815 796-2918, Fax: 309 392-2518, E-mail: [gnaafzig@juno.com](mailto:gnaafzig@juno.com)
- Indiana-Michigan Mennonite Conference Historian**, Leonard Gross 17700 South Main St., Goshen, IN 46526, 574 535-7473, E-mail: [leonardg@goshen.edu](mailto:leonardg@goshen.edu)
- Juniata College Archives and Special Collections**, Donald F. Durnbaugh, 1700 Moore St, Huntingdon, PA 16652-2119, 814 641-3484;

- Fax: 814 641-3435; E-mail: [durnbaughd@juniata.edu](mailto:durnbaughd@juniata.edu)
- Juniata Mennonite Historical Society**, Noah L. Zimmerman, The Historical Center, HCR 63, Richfield, PA 17086, 717 694-3543
- Kauffman Museum**, Rachel Pannabecker, Bethel College, North Newton, KS 67117-0531, 316 283-1612, Fax: 316 283-2107, E-mail: [rpannabe@bethelks.edu](mailto:rpannabe@bethelks.edu)
- Kidron Community Historical Society**, Bruce Detweiler Breckbill, director, Kidron-Sonnenberg Heritage Center, 13153 Emerson Rd, PO Box 234, Kidron, OH 44636, 330 857-9111, E-mail: [kidron@sssnet.com](mailto:kidron@sssnet.com)
- Lancaster Mennonite Historical Society**, Brinton L. Rutherford, director, 2215 Millstream Rd, Lancaster, PA 17602, 717 393-9745, Fax: 717 393-8751, E-mail: [lmhs@lmhs.org](mailto:lmhs@lmhs.org), Web site: <http://www.lmhs.org>
- Lower Salford Historical Society**, Joshua Kratz, president, PO Box 150, Lederach, PA 19450, 610 584-5536, Fax: 610-584-1491, E-mail: [lowersalford@hotmail.com](mailto:lowersalford@hotmail.com)
- Manitoba Mennonite Historical Society**, Jake Peters, president, 600 Shaftesbury Blvd, Winnipeg, MB R3P 0M4, 204 888-6781, E-mail: [jacob.peters@uwinnipeg.ca](mailto:jacob.peters@uwinnipeg.ca), Web site: <http://www.mmhs.org>
- Masthof**, J. Lemar and Lois Ann Mast, 219 Mill Road, Morgantown, PA 19543, Telephone: (610) 286-0258 or Fax: (610) 286-6860, E-mail: [mast@masthof.com](mailto:mast@masthof.com), Web site: <http://www.masthof.com>
- Menno Simons Historical Library and Archives**, Lois B. Bowman, Eastern Mennonite University, 1200 Park Rd, Harrisonburg, VA 22802, 540 432-4177, Fax: 540 432-4977, E-mail: [b Bowmanlb@emu.edu](mailto:b Bowmanlb@emu.edu), Web site: <http://www.emu.edu>
- Menno-Hof**, Joseph Yoder, PO Box 701, Shipshewana, IN 46565-0701, 260 768-4117, Fax: 260 738-4118, E-mail: [mennohof@th.net](mailto:mennohof@th.net), Web site: <http://www.mennohof.org>
- Mennonite Archives of Ontario**, Samuel Steiner, Conrad Grebel College, Westmount Rd N, Waterloo, ON N2L 3G6, 519 885-0220 ext. 238, Fax: 519 885-0014, E-mail: [steiner@library.uwaterloo.ca](mailto:steiner@library.uwaterloo.ca), Web site: <http://grebel.uwaterloo.ca>
- Mennonite Brethren Churches (Canada) Historical Committee**, Abe Dueck, Centre for Mennonite Brethren Studies, 1-169 Riverton Ave, Winnipeg, MB R2L 2E5, 204 669-6575, Fax: 204 654-1865, E-mail: [adueck@mbconf.ca](mailto:adueck@mbconf.ca), Web site: <http://www.mbconf.ca/mbstudies/>
- Mennonite Brethren Churches (Canada) Historical Committee**, Abe Dueck, Director, Centre for Mennonite Brethren Studies, 1-169 Riverton Ave, Winnipeg, MB R2L 2E5, (204) 669-6575, Fax: (204) 654-1865, E-mail: adueck@mbconf.ca, Web site: <http://www.mbconf.ca/mbstudies/>
- Mennonite Brethren Conference (USA) Historical Commission**, Paul Toews, Executive Secretary, Center for Mennonite Brethren Studies, 4824 E Butler, Fresno, CA 93727, Telephone: (209) 453-2225, E-mail: [pttoews@fresno.edu](mailto:pttoews@fresno.edu), Web site: <http://www.fresno.edu/affiliation/hc/index.htm>
- Mennonite Church Canada Heritage Committee**, Alf Redekopp, director, Mennonite Heritage Centre, 600 Shaftesbury Blvd, Winnipeg, MB R3P 0M4, 204 888-6781, Fax: 204 831-5675, E-mail: [aredekopp@mennonitechurch.ca](mailto:aredekopp@mennonitechurch.ca), Web site: <http://www.mennonitechurch.ca/heritage/mhc.html>
- Mennonite Genealogy Inc.**, PO Box 393, Winnipeg MB R3C 2H6, (open 1-4 pm daily), 204 772-0747, Fax: 204 832-6727; E-mail: [Margaret.Kroecker@UManitoba.ca](mailto:Margaret.Kroecker@UManitoba.ca)
- Mennonite Heritage Center**, Roy Showalter, 4850 Molly Pitcher Highway S, Chambersburg, PA 17201-9233, 717 375-4544, E-mail: [ebbpinola@juno.com](mailto:ebbpinola@juno.com)
- Mennonite Heritage Centre**, Alf Redekopp, director, 600 Shaftesbury Blvd, Winnipeg, MB R3P 0M4, 204 888-6781, Fax: 204 831-5675, E-mail: [aredekopp@mennonitechurch.ca](mailto:aredekopp@mennonitechurch.ca), Web site: <http://www.mennonitechurch.ca/heritage/mhc.html>
- Mennonite Heritage Museum**, Kristine Schmucker, director/curator, 200 N Poplar, PO Box 231, Goessel, KS 67053, 620 367-8200, E-mail: [mhmuseum@futureks.net](mailto:mhmuseum@futureks.net), Web site: <http://skyways.lib.ks.us/museums/gossele>
- Mennonite Heritage Village**, Sue Barkman, Executive Director, PO Box 1136, Steinbach, MB R0A 2A0, 204 326-9661, Fax: 204 326-5046, E-mail: [mennovil@mb.sympatico.ca](mailto:mennovil@mb.sympatico.ca), Web site: <http://www.mennoniteheritagevillage.com>
- Mennonite Historians of Eastern Pennsylvania**, Sarah Wolfgang

- Heffner, Mennonite Heritage Center,** 565 Yoder Rd, PO Box 82, Harleysville, PA 19438-0082, 215 256-3020, Fax: 215 256-3023, E-mail: [info@mhep.org](mailto:info@mhep.org), Web site: <http://www.mhep.org/>
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- Mennonite Historical Society**, Susan Biesecker-Mast, Chair, Bluffton College, 1166 280 W College Ave, Ste 1, Bluffton, OH 45817-1196 Telephone: (419) 358-3082, Fax: (419) 358-3232, E-mail: [bieseckermasts@bluffton.edu](mailto:bieseckermasts@bluffton.edu)
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- Pacific Northwest Mennonite Conference Historian**, Margaret Shetler, 5326 Briar Knob Loop NE, Scotts Mills, OR 97375, 503 873-6406, E-mail: [ralphshetler@juno.com](mailto:ralphshetler@juno.com)
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- Swiss Mennonite Cultural and Historical Association**, Delbert Goering, treasurer, 1711 Buckskin Rd, Moundridge, KS 67107,

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# The Back Page

## In Memoriam: Louise Stoltzfus, 1952-2002

Louise Stoltzfus, 50, of Lancaster, Pa., died November 20, 2002 after battling leukemia for three months. A freelance writer and editor, she wrote twelve books, including *Traces of Wisdom, Amish Women and the Pursuit of Life's Simple Pleasures, The Best of Mennonite Fellowship Meals, The Story of Philhaven, Two Amish Folk Artists and Quiet Shouts: Stories of Lancaster Mennonite Women Leaders.*

Raised in an Amish home, Stoltzfus taught in a one-room Old Order Amish school, was the curator of The Peoples' Place Quilt Museum, director of The People's Place Gallery, Intercourse, Pa., and editor of MCC's *Women's Concerns Report*. Louise was a member of Blossom Hill Mennonite Church, Lancaster, Pa., where she served as former congregational chair, lay speaker and Sunday school teacher. Louise is survived by her parents, Jonathan Daniel and Miriam Mary Lantz Stoltzfus, four sisters, and six brothers.

Patricia Haverstick, current editor of the *Women's Concerns Report*, wrote, "In all of her writing, Louise worked towards the goal of affirming the roles Mennonite and Amish women have

played in the home, in the Church, and in the community." Iris de Leon-Hartshorn, Director of the Peace and Justice Ministries Program at MCC U.S., says, "Not only did Louise affirm these roles, she gave voice to the women she was writing about. She wrote and presented the stories of these women in such a way that was authentic to their experiences and gave validity to their stories. Because of this, Louise was highly respected in the communities in which she worked and lived."

In her book, *Amish Women*, Stoltzfus wrote thoughtfully about her relationship to her community of origin, "I am glad once to have been Amish . . . It is a life I still sometimes long for. One I do not have—nor ever will have—but one which I treasure and from which I have learned much. In both its transcendent benevolence, and its broken shards. For it is not utopian. It is touched by grief and loss. By pain and misunderstanding. By buried hopes and hopeless dreams. But it is also touched by joy and fortune. By pleasure and appreciation. By living hopes and hopeful dreams." 

—jes

*Continued from page 15*

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## Mennonite Historical Bulletin

Mennonite Church USA Historical Committee  
 1700 South Main Street  
 Goshen, IN 46526-4794  
 T: (574) 535-7477  
 F: (574) 535-7756  
 E: [archives@goshen.edu](mailto:archives@goshen.edu)  
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# I Wish I'd Been There: Who Robbed the Stagecoach on the Road to Milford Square?

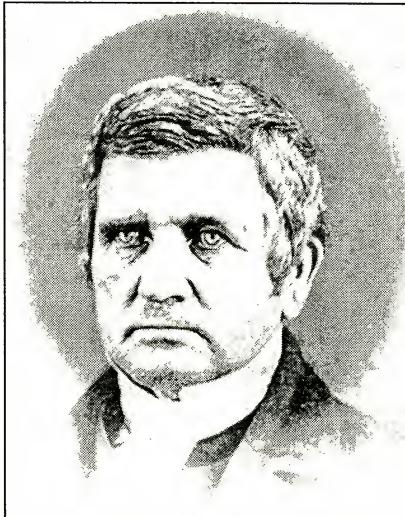
by Maynard Shelly

I wish I'd been there when John Oberholtzer rose in conference to present his idea for a constitution. When he did so, he dared to call attention to his coat now cut in the old style. An old member stood up, looked him over, and said, "He now has another coat. But I think it is yet worse than the other one." Whatever the cut of his coat, it brought him no respect. John tells us, "I felt very much mortified."

Getting Franconia in the spring of 1847 to pay any more attention to his new code for church order that he had drafted was no more successful. John wanted to read it to the meeting. "The majority rejected the document without knowing in the least the contents thereof," he said. His new plain coat was too little and too late. Nor could he assure the guardians of the old ways he would not cut away at their faith.

John Detweiler, deacon at Rockhill, said, "Let it be read." Voices from the benches protested the effort to read something for which they had not asked.

Supporters tried another way to promote their cause. They asked that their draft be printed and sent to every member of the conference to read and examine until the fall meet-



*Thieves swiped 950 copies of the constitution John H. Oberholtzer had drafted from the Allentown stagecoach in the summer of 1847, but the fifty they missed were enough to kindle a fire in the Mennonite community that fall.*  
(Credit: Verna Sell Willauer)

ing. That was also voted down.

Bishop John Hunsicker, hurt by such ill will, said, "This is party spirit." Reaching beyond his rights as moderator, he told the meeting, "It will be printed anyway."

Shortly after returning home to Swamp, Oberholtzer ordered a printer in Allentown to print 1,000 copies in the form of a small booklet with a paper cover. It came to twenty-one pages. He was in a hurry to send copies to every congregation.

The books left Allentown on the stage bound for Milford Square. Since the coach would pass through Coopersburg, possibly stopping to change horses after crossing South Mountain, permission had been given for William Oberholtzer, John's brother, to take fifty copies out for the Saucon congregation. William did this.

But when the stage arrived in Milford Square, all the boxes were gone.

What happened? Was the stagecoach robbed? If so, by whom? And for what reason? On July 16, Oberholtzer wrote to Abraham Hunsicker asking him to send one of his sons to the Philadelphia office of the stagecoach line. Look for the lost books was John's request. Hunsicker didn't follow through, since Oberholtzer had told him that "the first stagecoach proprietors lost them, and it's also in their place to look for them."

**Lancaster fears danger to old faith.** By the end of August, a copy turned up in Lancaster, where six Mennonite elders read it and told the bishops and ministers in Franconia what they thought. They didn't like it. They objected to Oberholtzer's proposal on choosing ministers, supporting them, going to court to "protect their honor and earthly goods," allowing members to marry outside the church, and to receive members baptized as

infants. Their first objection was about keeping a record of conference actions. It "would be imitating the worldly practice exactly. Therefore we cannot and will not accept such a thing, for we believe that the Gospel is record enough to keep the Conference and the church in order."

Franconia Mennonites and Oberholtzer's followers "solved" their disagreements by breaking fellowship and going separate ways, but the stagecoach mystery was never solved. Was the constitution reprinted? Or were the fifty copies taken out at Saucon enough to inform those who wanted to read it? I wish I'd been there to find out. 

—Maynard Shelly, North Newton, Kan., is writing a history of the West Swamp Mennonite Church, Quakertown, Pa. This is an excerpt from the book, which was also published in the congregational newsletter.

## Noodles by Jep Hostetler

How can it be that the Bible does not speak about noodles, a genuine Mennonite food? Did you ever attend a Mennonite potluck where there were NO noodle dishes of any kind?

In addition, the word "noodle," all by itself, is a very funny word. Therefore, Mennonites eat funny food. Think about it. Say the word "noodle" out loud several times, like "nooooooo.....dle", or like "noo....dlliilillile" or as my granddaughter was fond of saying, "nooodoooos." If more than one person

says "noodle, noodle, noodle" and several others around him or her say "noodle," someone will of necessity have to laugh.

The word "noodle" has several different meanings for this 63-year-old Mennonite kid. Dad would often suggest that because of my spontaneous nature, I was a bit impetuous. He would seal his comments with something like, "Jeppy, you are just like a frog. You jump up in the air, and while you are up in the air you look around for some place to land. Why don't you use your noodle?" Use my noodle? I think he meant use my



brain. So brain equals noodle, or noodle equals brain. Did you ever think about eating brains while you are eating noodles? There must be some connection because my dad told me to use my noodle.

My mind's eye still holds a vivid image of my mother making homemade noodles. She would faithfully, i.e., about four times a year, make up a big batch of egg noodles. She rolled dough out on the oilcloth-covered kitchen table, into a very large, thin, circular, flour-dusted creation that looked like an over-grown thin pizza crust. Deftly her hand would take a knife and cut long, narrow strips from this massive flat thing, and place the strings carefully over a rack that was on top of the old Frigidaire. There the noodles dried, waiting to be placed in a fabulous chicken noodle soup (which incidentally had more chicken and more noodles than it did soup), or made into our favorite dish, "buttered noodles."

All this brings me to another encounter with noodles. Shortly after our marriage my wife Joyce wanted to please me with a special dish of

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**Editor:** John E. Sharp; **Assistant Editor:** Ruth Schrock; **Copy editor:** Don Garber; **Design:** Katie Hershberger; **Contributing editors:** J. Robert Charles, Marlene Epp, Reg Good, Rachel Waltner Goossen, Leonard Gross, Amos B. Hoover, Janeen Bertsche Johnson, Russell Krabill, Glenn M. Lehman, Joseph Liechty, Joseph S. Miller, Levi Miller, Steven Nolt, Erv Schlabach, Jonathan Showalter, Mary Sprunger, Dennis Stoesz, Gerald Studer, Wilmer Swope, Marilyn Helmuth Voran, Franklin Yoder.

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# I Was There, but It Wasn't Nice: The Closing of Goshen College in 1923

by Paton Yoder

It happened in the spring of 1923. That was the time when the Mennonite Board of Education closed Goshen College for a year. It was also the year in which schisms were occurring in a number of the "Old" Mennonite congregations in Indiana and Ohio. My father, Silvanus Yoder, an active layman in the Clinton Frame congregation east of Goshen, had only recently been appointed to serve on the "Local Board" of Goshen College. In that capacity he freely supported the decision to shut down the college for a year, although his daughter, Rhea, a senior at the college, vigorously opposed this step. Not very conservative himself, he was, and would always be, a supporter of The Establishment. He had inherited this stance from his father, who had been very critical of what he thought were the quarrelsome dissidents in the Oak Grove (Wayne County, Ohio) crisis of 1890.

I, Silvanus' youngest, turned eleven years old that spring. Even at that tender age I understood something of what was occurring in church affairs. I knew that some of my uncles and aunts were liberals and were ready to allow women to wear hats and to make other changes in their lifestyle. And I knew that Rhea was rejected by the Mission Board for foreign missionary service possibly (but not certainly) because she had been on the side of these liberals during her college years. On the other hand, I knew also that many of those in leadership positions suspected that "modernism" (which was raising some questions about the inspiration of the Scriptures) was creeping into the

library and curriculum of Goshen College. Father was very much opposed to modernism.

But my next older brother Samuel, he who was to be a professor of English at Goshen College in the early 1930s and again from 1945 to 1970, had



*Goshen College President Irvin R. Detweiler, 1922 (Credit: Maple Leaf, 1922)*

graduated from high school that spring. He would be ready for college in the fall. Sensing the situation, a student recruiter from Bluffton College came to our farm home near Middlebury. I remember the visit almost vividly. If Goshen was to be closed for the 1923-24 school year, would Silvanus consider sending his son to Bluffton?

Silvanus and wife Susie had extended full hospitality to this Bluffton recruiter, but when he posed this question on the way to the supper table, after a polite visit in our living room, Silvanus responded quickly and with deep conviction: "I'd rather

send my son to a state university than to Bluffton College!"

One can understand Silvanus' caustic (but unaccented) reply to the Bluffton recruiter with a degree of sympathy only in the light of the feelings and fears then circulating among the Old Mennonites. Father feared that Samuel's education at Bluffton would be laced with undetected traces of modernism. At a state university, on the other hand, the poison would be openly administered and easily detected.

I wish I knew the identity of that Bluffton recruiter!

Postscript. Rather than send Samuel to Bluffton College in 1923-24, Silvanus sent him to Manchester College, the Church of the Brethren school about 45 miles south of Goshen. But the next fall, when Goshen College was reopened, Samuel was waiting at the registrar's office! By 1935 all of his four siblings were to have graduated from Goshen. Further, ten of the next generation—the grandchildren—likewise graduated from Goshen College. Only one, because of different interests, would choose another educational track.

—Paton Yoder, Goshen, Ind., in his retirement has written extensively about Amish Mennonites. Among his books are Tennessee John Stoltzfus: Amish Church-Related Documents and Family Letters (1987) and Tradition and Transition, Amish Mennonites and Old Order Amish 1800-1900 (1991).

# Harder Responds to Leasa on Plockhoy

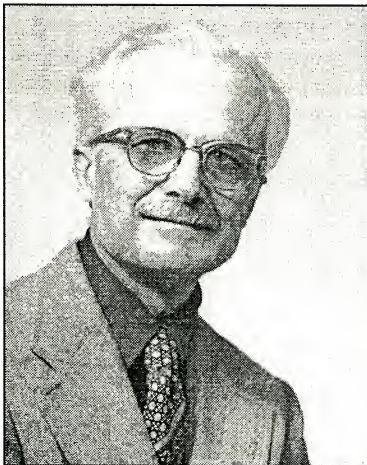
Several months ago a friend drew my attention to the three articles about Plockhoy published in the *Mennonite Historical Bulletin* (April 2001, January 2002, October 2002). I suspect that's about all you want on this subject, although more could and perhaps should be said.

Plantenga's articles are certainly well written and are excellent for adding contexts to Plockhoy's endeavors in Amsterdam and London. He had no new information about Plockhoy himself, and most of what he wrote was gleaned from my book published 51 years ago, *Plockhoy from Zurik-Zee*.

Leasa's article does indeed "set the record straight" on one part of the story. The new information reported here is the 102-page hardcover book, *1671 Census of the Delaware* by Peter S. Craig, published in 1999 by the Genealogical Society of Pennsylvania. There is a difference, however, between setting the record straight and updating it. The story I told fifty years ago is not mostly "false" as he claims but needing the corrections that his new source contributes. A little less arrogance and guesswork on Leasa's part would have been appreciated. His 37 endnotes, eleven of which cite my book and articles on Plockhoy, do not document his hunches. For instance, how can we know for sure that Plockhoy's settlers were recruited from the "urban poor" of Amsterdam and that the majority of them were not Mennonites? Leasa cannot document these assumptions but can only say, "I believe...."

Leasa's hunch in this regard is based on the new finding that one of Plockhoy's settlers was his brother, who had been serving at the Dutch fort at the Delaware Horekil in 1660 and was probably the soldier-informant that Plockhoy mentioned in his

Amsterdam prospectus. If the settlers were Mennonites, why would a veteran Dutch soldier have joined? Insight on this question can be gleaned from Plockhoy's second Dutch publication, *Kort Verhael Van Nieuw Nederlands*



Leland Harder, North Newton, Kan.

(*Brief Account of New Netherlands*), which explains the kind of pacifist polity Plockhoy had in mind: Article 40: "It is further recommended that every colonist who feels personally free to do so provide himself with that which is necessary for his defense, at least with a firelock, pistol, and broad sword, powder and lead in proportion." Article 41: "The Mennonites and all those who could not conscientiously do so should in relation to this regulation and also in relation to guard and other military service pay a certain tax if the community would desire or if a majority vote would so indicate." Article 42: "They will also be exempt from all voting on defense matters and fortification, and from orders from officers in this relation and concerning military service." In a self-governing "commonwealth" on the colonial American frontier, with constant threats of invasion by European raiders of English (1664) and Swedish (1673) nationality, not to mention the assumed threat of native

Americans, Plockhoy had implemented a two-kingdom ethic that subsequently characterized American Mennonitism for the next three centuries.

We are indeed indebted to Peter Craig for reliable information about what happened to Plockhoy's settlers after the settlement was "destroyed to a naile" in the Anglo-Dutch war for control of New Netherland/New York. Plockhoy himself died during or soon after the attack by the Duke of York's forces. His wife remarried, and his sister's husband took over the leadership of the group. It was Plockhoy's blind son and wife (and not the parents) who came to Germantown in the 1690s seeking refuge. The 1671 census was scribbled on two sheets of parchment, and it took Craig a decade to identify the names using records of deeds, land allotments, wills, and other bits and pieces of extant information. It was a singular research achievement, but Leasa is not entirely accurate when he alleges that this was a "previously unknown historical document." The census had actually been published in 1877. Until 1977 it was unknown to Delaware historians because it had been appended to an unrelated document in the New York State Archives.

Most of the interest in Plockhoy's ideas over the past fifty years has centered on his communitarian vision. Apropos to what's going on in Mennonite Church USA, Plockhoy's ideas for new mechanisms for open-minded discussion and discernment of issues should have a renewed relevance. ♦

—Leland Harder, North Newton, Kan., now retired from teaching at Bethel College, co-authored *Plockhoy from Zurik-zee: The Study of a Dutch Reformer in Puritan England and Colonial America in 1952* (with Marvin Harder).

## Leasa Replies to Harder on Plockhoy

Harder is probably right that the tone of my article was too close to arrogant. I regret my failure to write more humbly, especially since I was only “announcing” discoveries made by someone else.

Harder comes down harder on me than on Platenga, despite admitting that Platenga added nothing new to the story and “most of what he wrote was gleaned from my book published fifty years ago.”

Like Bart Platenga, however, I am not a professional historian. My work is mostly in genealogy, with secondary interests in church and local history. A member of the Genealogical Society of Pennsylvania, I read the Peter Craig article when it first appeared in 1998. When I saw or heard no response to it from Mennonite historians over the next several years, I decided to write something to draw attention to it. When I was asked to contribute an article to a new Delaware Mennonite historical publication, I wrote “Setting the Record Straight.”

Like Platenga, I relied quite heavily on Harder’s published work on Plockhoy. And I did not intend to demean or dismiss it in any way. I did not say that the story he told fifty years ago was “mostly false,” but I said: “much of [the story] is false.” Misidentification of the Germantown Plockhoy and the belief in the total destruction of the community were what I had in mind, and, given the paucity of historical information on the colony, that seemed to me to be “much of the story.” I also tried to explain the origin and history of the errors in the story.

Did I inadequately document my “hunches,” as Harder accuses? This is interesting, since I was in large part using his book to construct my “picture” of what happened. I looked at

the difficulty Plockhoy had in getting colonists, the socioeconomic well-being of the Dutch in general and the Mennonites in particular by the 1660s, the lack of evidence of Mennonites in Delaware at any time from 1663 on, and the words of Plockhoy in his first letter to the Amsterdam City Council in November 1661 (quoted in *Plockhoy from Zurik-zee*) and concluded that there may have been few Mennonite families in the colony. Those seemed to me adequate grounds for what I clearly stated was a guess.

Yes, my statement that the 1671 census was a “previously unknown historical document” is incorrect. But Craig argues that the “misleading and garbled” 1877 publication was responsible for it remaining undiscovered by Delaware historians until a new transcription was done in 1977. The contents of the document were certainly “unknown” to almost all interested scholars.

I appreciate Harder’s concern that Plockhoy’s communitarian ideals and vision not be overlooked by focusing on the historical record of his colony. But the aim of my article was really limited to disclosing the new material. Judging from the tone of his criticism, Professor Harder doesn’t think I performed a useful service by doing that.

I am sorry. In a letter to Harder, I expressed my admiration and gratitude for his detailed, compassionate scholarship of a half-century ago. I can see how the somewhat narrow focus of my article on the events of 1663 and afterward and my catchy title would have irritated someone who had studied, thought, and written on the subject so deeply and for so many years. I really wish I had titled it: “Something New on Peter Plockhoy” and had adopted a more humble tone in my writing. 



K. Varden Leasa,  
Downingtown, Pa.

(Continued from page 2)

buttered noodles. They were adequate, but they did not compare with my mother’s buttered noodles. Perhaps it was the store-bought noodles that were the problem. So, with diligence Joyce searched specialty stores and Amish markets to find the right noodles. This went on for nearly seven years, until one evening she heard the words, “These are just like mom’s buttered noodles! Wow! What did you do to finally find the secret formula?” All along she could have called my mother to find out the secret, but no, that would have been embarrassing. Her answer was simple, sheepish, and clear, “Honey”, she said, “I used real butter”!

Finally, a Mennonite friend of mine, originally from Neighborville, Pa., said with a grin, “I never could get folks to tell me why the town had the nickname it did, but it was called by all the locals ‘noodledoosey.’”

Maybe we should use our noodles, eat more buttered noodles, and move to “noodledoosey”. 

—Jep Hostetler, Columbus, Ohio, is a humorist and, an associate professor emeritus at the Ohio State University College of Medicine. He and his wife Joyce serve as staff persons for the Mennonite Medical Association.

(Continued from page 7)

Press, 1996).

<sup>2</sup> Anna Juhnke, “North American Mennonite Playwrights, 1980-1996,” *Mennonite Quarterly Review* 71 (1997): 43-44.

<sup>3</sup> For more on *The Blowing and the Bending*, see Juhnke 54-55.

<sup>4</sup> Paraphrase of Ervin Beck in Juhnke 43.

# A Review

## Old Story, Timely Play: *Jordan's Stormy Banks*

by Mary Sprunger

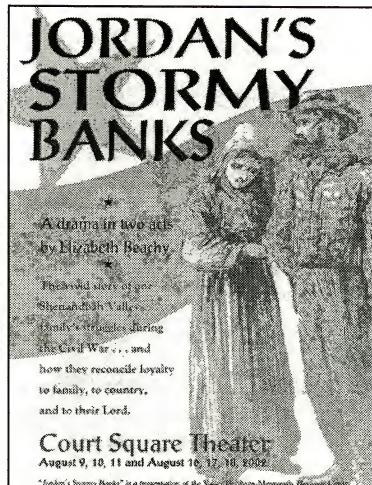
In August 2002, the play *Jordan's Stormy Banks* by Elizabeth Beachy debuted in Harrisonburg, Virginia, treating residents and visitors of the Shenandoah Valley to a story of tough choices and faithfulness during a war that cut through families, farms, and congregations. In the Midwest, the dramatic American Mennonite peace story revolves around World War I and the experiences of conscientious objectors in military camps and prisons. In Virginia, the pivotal experience for Mennonites was the Civil War. The Shenandoah Valley was the site of numerous battles as Confederate and Union troops marched up and down the so-called "Valley Pike" (today U.S. Highway 11 or Interstate 81). Mennonites and Brethren faced difficult choices in the midst of war, such as how to vote in the 1861 statewide referendum on whether Virginia should secede from the Union. Even more challenging and divisive was how to deal with conscription into the Confederate army. Options included full participation in the Confederate forces, joining the army but refusing to use

a weapon, or flight. A number of Mennonites and Brethren tried to make their way through the mountains to West Virginia (on the Union side) and then on to Pennsylvania. Some were caught and imprisoned before they completed the thirty-mile trip to safety. Elder John Kline, a vocal advocate for conscientious objection, is revered today as a Brethren martyr because he was murdered in 1864 for his challenges to

Confederate conscription. As agricultural producers in the breadbasket of the Confederacy, Mennonites and Brethren were also on the receiving end of Union General Sheridan's 1864 campaign of destruction, known locally as "the Burning," that razed

story to the Civil War narrative so prominent in the Shenandoah Valley. Commissioning the play was a way to publicize the purpose of the Heritage Center and work at shaping the story. According to Al Keim, director of the center, "We were amazed by the positive response to the play. It seems to have met a need, a kind of definition of what Mennonites and Brethren are and stand for."

*Jordan's Stormy Banks* is an impressive first-time effort for playwright Beachy, an Eastern Mennonite University theater graduate and master of fine arts student at Regent University in Virginia Beach. The subject matter almost requires a predictable plot. The drama centers around one family, the Showalters (intentionally generic so that they could be either Mennonite or Brethren). Conveniently, there are a variety of responses to military activity embedded in this one family, which provides the dramatic tension. Son Christian chooses to fight for the Confederacy, while his brother Gabriel, a conscientious objector, is jailed for attempting to flee north. Son-in-law Reuben Herr, married to daughter Edith, dons a uniform but does not carry a weapon, and the love interest of a younger sister makes it safely to Pennsylvania. The main character is daughter Maria, played wonderfully by Kirsten Beachy (sister of the playwright). A young widow and mother, Maria is strong, brave, spirited, and resourceful. In one scene she serves pie to Union soldiers, successfully distracting them from their search for horses hidden on her farm. This scene is based loosely on a story from Beachy's family. The play climaxes when Union troops overrun the Valley: Reuben and Edith's farm is ransacked, Maria is burned when her farm is set ablaze, and Christian faces a showdown in the family kitchen



A Union soldier invades the Herr household and threatens Edith. (Sarah Mumbauer)

barns, mills, and crops. The new Valley Brethren-Mennonite Heritage Center, an emerging joint venture between the two historic

peace churches of the Shenandoah Valley, commissioned *Jordan's Stormy Banks*. Only in the last several decades have Mennonites and Brethren there started to work together on various projects. This center represents a major leap forward in that cooperation. The goal is a museum that will interpret the beliefs, practices, and histories and help to sharpen the identity of Virginia Mennonites and Brethren. One hope is to contribute an alternative peace

with a Union soldier. Her play captures well the complicated experience of Mennonites and Brethren during the Civil War in a way that entertains, informs, and even inspires.

Issues of community surface in the play. A busybody neighbor, unsympathetic to nonresistance, added some tension and humor to the plot, although the portrayal came across as a caricature. Nevertheless, her neighborly intervention highlighted the relationship to the local community during a time of war. Her suspicions of disloyalty on the part of Mennonites and Brethren and the lack of understanding for their pacifist position

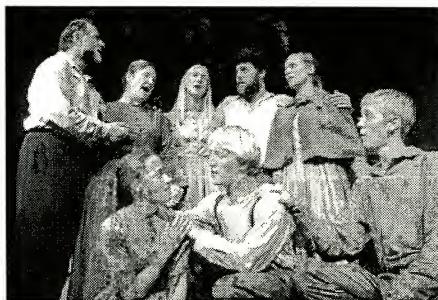
created hard feelings and even pain between neighbors previously on good terms. The importance of the other community in the play, the church, is woven throughout the drama via a group of soberly dressed congregants singing hymns off to one side of the stage. Appropriately, most of the music comes from *The Harmonia Sacra*, a popular nineteenth-century songbook published by Virginian Mennonite Joseph Funk, with some new arrangements by musical director Matthew Hunsberger.

Beachy first began writing the play as a series of "loosely connected vignettes" along the lines of *Quilters*. This has been a form typical of early Mennonite drama in the early 1970s, a style that tends to lessen the emotional impact on the audience.<sup>2</sup> Says Beachy, "After I'd written a number of them, however, I started to see that it needed more backbone, and began to string them together using the family as the connecting link." The result was something reminiscent of *The Blowing and the Bending*, written in 1973 by James Juhnke and J. Harold Moyer, which Beachy has never read nor seen. Written at the end of the

Vietnam War era, the play focused on a Kansas Mennonite farm family as it struggled with threats from the community about not buying war bonds and making difficult choices about how to respond to the draft. Their German ancestry magnified the problems, as non-Mennonite neighbors viewed them as disloyal to the United States.<sup>3</sup> Mennonite drama commissioned by institutions, particularly that from the 1960s and early 1970s, has been characterized as "literal, didactic, self-congratulatory and uplifting."<sup>4</sup> While perhaps necessarily somewhat didactic,



Maria (Kirstin Beachy) feeds her homemade pie to Union soldiers.



The Showalter family comes together at the end of the play. In the front are (left to right) siblings Maria, Christian (Matthew Hunsberger), Gabriel (Hans Burkholder). In the back are father Lewis Showalter (Paul Roth), mother Abigail (Karen Moshier-Shenk), daughter Edith Herr (Sarah Mumbauer), son-in-law Reuben Herr (Shannon Dove), and daughter Sarah Showalter (Rosanna Nafziger).

Beachy's script has moved beyond the purely self-congratulatory and uplifting by introducing complexity and ambiguity into the play.

Directed by Paul Hildebrand (drama professor at Eastern Mennonite University) and held at Court Square Theater in downtown Harrisonburg, the show played to sell-out crowds, and extra performances had to be added during the two-weekend run. Noticeably absent in the audience, with only few exceptions, were the younger generations. In the aftermath

of the 9/11 terrorist attacks and in our present context of uncertainty and war, now is the time to expose Mennonite and Brethren young people to stories of peace from their own histories. This play was a good reminder of the hard choices that members of historic peace churches have always faced when their countries are at war. Especially relevant themes of the play include the gray areas that arise when one's own farm and home is being attacked; the community tensions that result when some opt out of the typical patriotic response; and the bravery and steadfastness of Mennonites and Brethren who remained true to their understanding of Christian pacifism. Keim's assessment of the play is that it "has a kind of universal quality about it; the resolution of whether to enlist in the war or not and the moral ambiguities connected with that decision is a timeless question, present in any age, and there are no cookie-cutter answers."

Since the debut production, Beachy has substantially rewritten the play. There will be several chances to see the revised version of the play in the summer of 2003, when *Jordan's Stormy Banks* goes on tour to Harrisonburg, Virginia (June 6-8, 13-15); Lancaster, Pennsylvania (June 19-22, 26-29); and Atlanta, Georgia, for the Mennonite Church USA Delegate Assembly (July 3-7).

—Mary Sprunger is associate professor of history at Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, Virginia.

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#### Notes

<sup>1</sup> For Mennonites and the Civil War, see Samuel Horst, *Mennonites and the Confederacy: A Study in Civil War Pacifism* (Scottdale, Pa.: Herald Press, 1962); and Jacob R. Hildebrand, *A Mennonite Journal, 1862-1865: A Father's Account of the Civil War in the Shenandoah Valley*, compiled by John R. Hildebrand (Shippensburg, Pa.: Burd Street

(Continued on page 5)

# The Golden ABCs: Jonathan Zug's Copybook

by Paton Yoder

This copybook is in the familiar form of early nineteenth-century composition books, the kind commonly used in elementary schools. According to my memory such books could be entirely blank, except for lines to guide the writer, or they could have writing samples on the top line of each page for the user to copy repeatedly, line after line, in order to learn to write not only legibly, but also gracefully.

Sewed inside the covers of this copybook are twenty-eight pages of the recordings of a meticulous and artistically oriented person who printed everything therein in beautiful Roman (not German) script, using mostly black ink, but sometimes using red ink for alternate lines or alternate verses of poetry.

The pages of composition, numbered from 1 to 24, are sewn inside the above-described covers. Following those pages are appended two sheets taken from a slightly smaller copybook. These provide the vital statistics of some of the persons buried in the Amish cemetery in Fairfield County, Ohio, and elsewhere. Some are obviously relatives.

Inserted loosely between pages of the booklet is a slip of paper with four lines in the same handwriting as those on the bound and numbered pages of the booklet, translated as follows:

*A greeting to you, Leah and Elizabeth, I am sending you a booklet, but it is not written nicely; my hand is so trembly; when you come write me a letter so that I may know whether you have received it.*

On the other side of this inserted leaflet are the vital statistics of what appear to be those of the composer/copier of this entire booklet:

*Jonathan Zug was born on Dec. 21, 1809  
Today—May 30, 1890—I am 80 years, 5 m.  
10 days old.*

This booklet came down to David Yoder from his forebears, but at this time (March 5, 2002) he does not know the route it took through the generations to end up in his hands. He has not yet been able even to identify Leah and Elizabeth, named above as donees of this composition

book. Further inquiry should unfold this mystery.

Additional evidence that the composer/copier was Jonathan Zug may be found at the bottom of page nine of the booklet (at the end of a poem) where Jonathan Zug signs his name, evidently as author, and indicates the year—1888—in which the poem was composed.

This Jonathan Zug is clearly the one identified by Gingerich and Kreider (*Amish and Amish Mennonite Genealogies*, pp. 554 and 564) by the Code no. ZK2244.

## Further identification of the composer/copier of this booklet

According to that inserted leaflet (see p. 1 above) Jonathan Zug was born in Mifflin County, Pennsylvania, on December 21, 1809, although Gingerich and Kreider's *Genealogy* says that he was born on December 2 of that year. He was the son of David Zook (1780-1863) and Anna Lantz (1778-1868). In 1818 he moved with his parents to Wayne County, Ohio. In 1833, at 23 or 24 years of age, he moved to Fairfield County, Ohio. This move may have been made around the time of his marriage to Nancy King (1817-93). He may have been ordained first as a deacon for the Amish congregation in Fairfield County, but sometime between 1836 and 1862 he was ordained a minister there and served until about 1877. Then he moved to Holmes County, Ohio, he being one of the last of the Amish settlers to leave Fairfield County. In Holmes County he ministered in the Martins Creek congregation and was ordained a bishop there in 1890. At that time he would have been about seventy years old!

Fourteen children were born to Jonathan and Nancy, but most of them died in childhood, and only three ever married. One of their children (Christian, 1842-62) evidently joined the Union armed forces during the Civil War, was wounded in battle, and died near Louisville, Kentucky, on his way home.

Jonathan Zook's adult years, during most of which he was active as a minister in the Amish church, included the period of the Great Schism (ca. 1855-65) in that denomination. Some of the Amish leaders wanted to make what we (in 2002) would consider a few small changes in the *Ordnung* of the church, but other leaders felt these changes were concessions to the "world." In an attempt to

keep the opposing factions together, some Amish ministers organized and promoted a series of annual Amish ministers meetings. These meetings continued from 1862 to 1878. Minister Jonathan Zook attended the meetings of 1862, 1864, 1868, 1870, and 1873. That he continued to attend some of these conferences after 1865 (after the change-minded leaders were in full control) indicates that he chose to join the faction that was ready to make those changes in the *Ordnung*. When he moved to Holmes County in about 1877 he joined the Martins Creek Amish Mennonite congregation. This step adds confirmation to other indications that he had chosen to affiliate already in the 1860s with these change-minded Amish, who took on the name Amish Mennonite.

The above biographical sketch of Jonathan Zook is based largely on that of Steven R. Estes in Paton Yoder and Steven R. Estes, *Proceedings of the Amish Ministers' Meetings, 1862-1878*, p. 385, but also draws from David Luthy, *The Amish in America, Settlements that Failed, 1840-1860*, pp. 349-355, and from Gingerich and Kreider, *Amish and Amish Mennonite Genealogies*, pp. 554 and 564.

### **Jonathan Zook's Composition Book**

**This translation, especially of the poetry,  
is quite preliminary.**

**p. 1**

**The Golden ABCs**

- [*Aufmerksam*] Listen attentively to God's word. Acts 16:14
- [*Brünnstig*] Fervent in spirit. Rom. 12:17 [12:11]
- [*Christo*] Christ gave himself wholly. Titus 2:14
- [*Demüthig*] Humble toward God and man. Matt 11:29
- [*Ehrbar*] Honorable in dealings. Rom. 12:17
- [*Fruchtbar*] Fruitful in good works. John 15:5
- [*Gläubig*] Believing in the Lord Jesus. Acts 16:15
- [*Himmlich*] Heavenly minded. Phil. 3:20
- [*Immer*] Always rejoicing in the Lord. Phil. 4:4
- [*Keusch*] Chaste and pure. Matt. 5:8
- [*Laufer*] Sincere and without offence. Phil. 1:10
- [*Mitleidig*] Compassionate toward the destitute. I Pet. 3:8
- [*Nüchtern*] Calm in prayer. 1 Peter 4:8
- [*Ordentlich*] Orderly in all things. I Cor. 14:40
- [*Prächtig*] Glorious in heavenly adornment. Isaiah 61:10
- [*Quiff(?)*] \_\_\_\_? And free from evil conscience. Heb. 10:22
- [*Reich*] Rich in the gift of the Holy Spirit. 1 Cor. 1:5,6
- [*Sanftmütig*] Meek. Eph. 4:32
- [*Treu*] Faithful to the Lord Jesus unto death. Rev. 2:10
- [*Unterthänig*] Submissive to one another in the fear of God. Eph. 5:21

**p. 2**

- [*Vollkommen*] Perfect as your Father. Matt. 5:48
- [*Wac(h)ter*] Watch always. Luke 21:36
- [*Ysopen*] Purge me with hyssop. Ps. 51:9
- [*Züchtig*] Chaste and modest. Titus 2:12

**[A poem without a title]**

1.

Children who want to be blessed [or to be saved]  
Have the best time now.  
The times pass swiftly on earth;  
Eternity soon comes  
[But] now anyone can yet choose  
[Either] eternal joy or pain.  
Whoever may want to be numbered among the blest  
[or saved] some day  
Must already here [on earth] be blessed [or saved].

2.

[You] children who want to be blessed [or saved],  
Come to Jesus today.  
He is the one who to all earth  
Offers grace free of charge.  
With him there is fullness of joy,  
Heavenly atmosphere forever.  
Holy and high [*höhr*] is his purpose  
He verily blesses [saves].

**p. 3**

3.

[You] children who want to be blest [saved]  
Believe in God's Word;  
Follow in Jesus' companionship;  
Listen to him as the safe guard.  
There are also similar little paths  
With which to struggle, yes many  
[But please] lead us directly  
Into the blessed destination.

***Be Careful***

- Be careful with your tongue—let it say no evil words.
- Be careful with your eyes—let them not fasten on evil, or enticing matters.
- Be careful with your ears—do not let them hear wicked words.
- Be careful with your mouth—let no foul talk go out from it.
- Be careful with your hands—do not let them steal.
- Be careful with your feet—do not let them go on the path of godless people.
- Be careful with your heart—let no sins lodge therein.

p. 4

## JESUS' LITTLE LAMB

1.

Since I am Jesus little lamb  
 I rejoice only  
 In my Good Shepherd  
 Who surely knows how to be hospitable to me  
 Who loves me, knows me,  
 And calls me by name.

2.

Under his gentle staff  
 I go out in, and have  
 Unspeakably sweet pasturage  
 So that I suffer no want,  
 And so if I am thirsty  
 He leads me to the fount.

3.

Should I not then, be happy,  
 Lucky lamb that I am?  
 For after these beautiful days  
 I will finally be carried into  
 The Shepherd's arms and bosom  
 Amen, Yes my good fortune is great!

March 20, 1888

p. 5

## THE GOOD SHEPHERD

1.

Do you not see on God's pastures  
 That loving Shepherd drawing [you]?  
 Do you not see him on bloody trails,  
 Troubling himself for his sheep?

2.

See that a lamb has wandered away,  
 And he hastens with rapid pace;  
 Leaves the others all in a heap;  
 Searches for his lost one.

3.

Carried home on his shoulders,  
 The true Shepherd brings it.  
 No one may be anxiously fearful anymore,  
 Be it [the sheep] ever so far confused.

4.

Lord my God, on your pastures,  
 By your waters lead me.  
 [Whether] it be with joy or with pain,  
 Lead me securely.

p. 6

## [TO] THE CHILDREN

1.

You children young, you children small,  
 You surely must not fail us.  
 You must be the tender stem  
 In this wreath of the soul.

2.

An old heart is adamant as a rock,  
 Encircled with high battlements  
 That makes it difficult to conquer,  
 And for the Lord to win.

3.

But you are rather like the earth,  
 When spring breezes blow,  
 Then it is loose, fresh, and rich,  
 To sow seed therein.

4.

Now yet you feel the grace deeply,  
 Which you experience from God  
 That he calls you in this life,  
 Here under Christian surroundings.

5.

So that he gave you to the parents,  
 Who profess to be redeemed/saved,

p. 7

And who can be a shield and staff  
 To you children in life.

6.

[So] that to you the loving Jesus child  
 Has become a brother  
 So that all who belong to him  
 Will be raised to heaven.

7.

Now always, as he once did  
 On his life's pathway,  
 This dear man of mercy  
 Gives you children his blessing.

8.

All this good fortune is not bestowed  
 On the poor heathen child.  
 [Who] from the first day sees and hears  
 Nothing but misery and sins.

9.

It [he/she] is [burdened] with heavy and great depravity,  
 And goes to the grave with it.  
 And does not have such a fortunate lot  
 As you and I have.

p. 8

10.

Indeed, you beloved Christian child,  
 You have a better life;  
 So now be also well disposed  
 To those who gave it to you.

11.

And thank him continually, the good Lord,  
 With deed and word,  
 And think also of those who yet are far  
 From his gates of mercy.

12.

No, no, you children young and small,

You dare not fail us;  
You will be the tender bud  
In this wreath of souls.

Following is the writer's paraphrase of the story of Elijah's challenge to the prophets of Baal as recorded in 1 Kings 18.

Come here my people on Carmel's pinnacle;  
Today there will be the selection of a king;  
Today you will know before the middle of the evening  
Whether God, Jehovah or Baal,  
Whom you so long on both sides,  
Made love to [both?] Baal and Ashtaroth;  
Come, reflect on the Lord today  
And turn around [return] to your God.

**p. 9**

#### *House Blessing*

1.

Jesus live in my house  
[And] nevermore depart.  
Live therein with thy grace,  
[Fourth line missing]

2.

O you great man of mercy,  
Come in with your blessing  
May peace, joy, good fortune, and well-being  
[or salvation]  
Come into my house to share.

3.

Just as Job and Abraham  
Received your rich blessing,  
Even so give me the protection of  
Your gentle blessing.

4.

Jesus, live in my heart.  
If I endure fear and pain,  
If fear and affliction press,  
So help me, O faithful God.

5.

If I have riches no more;  
Nevertheless, the heavenly gift remains with me.  
[And] if I even yet endure affliction,  
Nevertheless the heavenly joy remains with me.

[Signed] Jonathan Zug, 1888

#### pp. 10-11

#### THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

With only a couple of minor exceptions, these two pages in Jonathan Zug's Copybook are identical to the Ten Commandments as printed in Martin Luther's translation of the *Bible*. The reader is referred to English translations of Exodus 20 for a translation of the Ten Commandments.

#### pp. 12-13

These two pages constitute the centerfold of Zug's copybook. Most of each page is occupied by a diamond-shaped quadrangle in which are hand-printed letters of the alphabet, lined up vertically as well as horizontally. The four corners of both pages are filled with Scripture texts, each printed within the outline of a heart. They are mostly translated below by using the A.V. [Note: The letters in the diamond on page 12 read *Fuerchte Gott* (Fear God). Letters are repeated often. The letters in the diamond on page 13 read *Liebe Gott* (Love God). Letters are repeated often.]

#### [p. 12, upper left and lower left]

The heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament shows his handwork. (Ps. 19:1) Day unto day uttereth speech

#### [p. 12, upper right and lower right]

and night unto night sheweth knowledge. There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard.

(Ps. 19:2, 3). Their line is

#### [p. 13, upper left and lower left]

gone out through all the earth and their words to the end of the world. In them hath he set a tabernacle for the sun; and this

#### [p. 13, upper right and lower right]

is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, and rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race. His going forth is from

**Here J. Z. ran out of space within the eight hearts in the corners of pp. 12-13, so he ended the quotation from Ps. 19 on two full lines at the bottom of p. 13.**  
the end of the heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it, and there is nothing hid from

**Here J. Z. runs out of lined space, and thus the quotation from Ps. 19 breaks off in the middle of a sentence!**

#### p. 14

#### CHILDREN COME IN

1.

Come little children, gather around,  
And get acquainted with Jesus  
Come for sure, and see how good he is,  
How gentle and faithful; come call him Master.

2.

Oh, see his friendliness  
As he leans down to you,  
How affectionately he himself offers  
To show you goodness always.

3.

He wants to teach you, softly and kindly,  
To live according to God's wisdom; he calls:  
Dear little child, come, and become devout;  
I want to give you everything.

4.

Indeed, then, come children; do come here

To Jesus' nice school; listen, learn,  
And follow his doctrines, which lessons are  
Not difficult; now set down here,  
On his chair of wisdom.

5.

How good it is, how nice and appropriate,  
How lovely to observe,  
When children are properly  
Obedient, and want only  
To enter Jesus' school.

**p. 15**

## JESUS' SCHOOL

6.

Here they learn with zeal and delight  
Right praying, reading, and singing  
And seek to conduct their life  
In godliness with Jesus.

7.

Oh, such children have it good  
They will live eternally in the kingdom of heaven  
With happy heart where Jesus  
Rewards the devout children.

8.

They will live there in great joy  
Every day and hour. No anxiety,  
No fear, no sadness, no pain  
Or hurt will encircle them any more.

9.

So learn eagerly, little children,  
And love Jesus affectionately. Serve him  
As your God and Lord, and flee far away  
From everything which is only sinful.

10.

Do not follow the counsel of evil children,  
Who run and play, who  
Only ridicule your Jesus, [and] do not love God,  
[And] do not want to be a scholar of Jesus.

11.

Get thoroughly acquainted with Jesus,  
And sit at his feet; there give him

**p. 16**

The right hand and say Savior,  
Oh, let me kiss you.

12.

Hang on to him as little children,  
On to his loving arms and say  
He should be gracious to you children,  
And be moved to pity.

13.

[That he] should bless you with understanding,  
So that you will shun the evil, that he should make  
You rightly informed; as a Savior,  
That he frees you from sin.

14.

Yes, beseech him, he will surely

Give you joy and love. His loving,  
Gentle, sweet yoke, yet as children,  
To carry with [serious] consideration.

15.

He will fill your young heart  
With his love, so that it will steadfastly meditate  
Heavenwards; and all joking  
Scorns his will.

16.

So children, hang on to him affectionately  
Oh, hang on to him by the hand, and say:  
O Jesus, lead me now, and lead me henceforth,  
Oh, lead us until the end.

**p. 17**

17.

Lead us out of this wasteland  
Of this wicked world turmoil, into the Fatherland,  
Where we will enjoy, oh faithful Jesus,  
The glory of heaven.

## THE HOURGLASS

O child, consider with concentration  
How we, little grains of seed, flow.  
Then see [who] you flow with,  
Just as we are made to turn to dust  
Will you also wear out.

Indeed, we flow very gently,  
Yet the seeds fall  
By day and by night, far and wide.  
Until from all of us  
The last one has fallen.

The last short hour will also fall to you.  
Always practice honesty and integrity  
Until your cold grave;  
And depart no finger's breadth  
Away from God's way.

**p. 18**

## WHAT PLEASES GOD

1.

What is pleasing to God, my gentle child,  
Accept happily; if it storms like the wind  
And thunders [so that] everything roars and crushes,  
Then be confident, for you are experiencing  
What pleases God.

2.

The best will is God's will;  
On this point rest calmly and quietly;  
This gives you refreshment within all the time  
[You] desire nothing, but only alone  
What pleases God.

3.

The most sagacious mind is God's mind;  
What mortals think falls down,

Comes to nothing, weak, tired and weary,  
Often does what is wicked and seldom that  
Which pleases God.

4.

The meekest/most devout spirit is God's Spirit,  
Who does not want evil to be done to anyone.  
He blesses when the wicked world  
Scolds and pursues [?flucht] us;  
[They are those] who never strive after  
What pleases God.

5.

The cheerfulest heart is God's heart,  
[It] throws everything distressful behind,  
**p. 19**

Protects and guards day and night  
Those who respect the noble and the holy  
What pleases God.

6.

He is the sovereign in the highest,  
On him rest our weal and woe.  
He holds the world in his hand,  
On the other hand [he] carries us [over] sea and land  
As it pleases God.

7.

His army, the stars, sun, and moon,  
Go off and on, as they keep doing;  
The earth is fruitful; without fail  
It produces corn, fruit juice wine, and oil [? Oel]  
As it pleases God.

8.

All is his, wisdom and understanding;  
To him it is known and familiar,  
Both when we think and practice evil,  
As well as when we do good and love  
As it pleases God.

9.

If you are scorned by everyone,  
Scoffed by your enemy and [they] sit on you,  
Be cheerful, for Jesus Christ  
Will uphold you, for in you [there] is that  
Which pleases God.

**p. 20**

10.

Faith lays hold on the highest kindness,  
Hope brings and produces patience;  
Locks both deep within one's heart  
So that your whole life becomes  
Pleasing to God.

11.

Your heritage is in the heavenly throne,  
Here is the scepter, kingdom, and crown,  
Here you will smell, hear, and see,  
Here will come to pass without end  
That which is pleasing to God.

**On the bottom half of page 20 are written three verses from Sirach (in the Apocrypha). The translations of the first two of which are copied from The New English Bible with the Apocrypha (Cambridge University Press, 1971.)**

A kind word counts more than a rich present; with a gracious man you will find both. Sirach 18:17.

(P. 141 of Apocrypha section of above indicated translation.)

Win your neighbor's confidence when he is poor, and you will share the joy of his prosperity. Sirach 22:23

**Although the above verse from Sirach is referenced as 22:28 by Zook and corresponds to that number in Luther's Bible, in the above indicated translation it is numbered Sirach 22:23.**

Oh, how wise you were in your youth, and were full of understanding as the waters cover the land. Sirach 47:16.  
**At the very bottom of p. 20 is a verse from Proverbs (called The Sayings of Solomon in Luther's Bible), as follows:**

Bow down thine ear and hear the words of the wise, and apply thine heart unto my knowledge.

**p. 21**

### An Untitled Poem

1.

I gladly go to school,  
And observe carefully,  
That it is necessary for me to learn  
For my lifework (career).  
I care for and honor the church  
As the beloved place.  
Therein I hear the teaching  
Out of God's holy word.

2.

And presses afresh on the heart  
[That] before God the Lord I am  
In sincere prayer.  
I know he hears it gladly.  
He accepts for himself my youth  
Into his loving kindness,  
And strengthens me in every virtue,  
On life's pathway.

**The following four-line verse stands alone at the bottom of p. 21.**

The beginning of sin's path is indeed  
A brighter way through the pasture,  
But his defection only produces danger,  
His end, night and dreadful.

**p. 22**

**On the right-hand margin of this page is written:  
A riddle for all.**

Wrestle over what I have to report:  
A strange company of people came into the land,  
Twenty men all decent/proper [seuberlich].  
Although not one was like the other  
Not one could speak an audible word [*laut Wort*].  
Therefore they themselves could not take revenge;  
Yet they were also of the good kind [of persons]  
Yet very useful in that time.  
They brought six interpreters with them,  
Very highly learned people, with good gifts  
~~The first astonished rending mouth afar;~~  
The second strode like a little child;  
The third whistled like a mouse;  
The fourth cried out like a wagoner;  
The fifth did like a clock;  
The sixth fulfilled the arts well;  
Therewith they cried out:  
Yet hear! The world has not yet passed away.

~~Who did signs and live, and wonders and died [?]~~  
What is the man's name whose staff turned into a snake[?]

**p. 23****CHILDLIKE LOVE**

1.

Children love and grieve  
Not through mistrust of their friends  
Who love you constantly unfathomably  
And mean it from the heart.  
Christian members arouse you again,  
Stay in the faith wholly united.

2.

Approach freely to the fire  
Of this great Jesus-love.  
Do not stay away; [may] he gladly help,  
And fill you with holy desire.  
Lord, we entreat, let it happen,  
Give such ardor, please do give

3.

To his poor [mortals], full compassion,  
Give to you, as you are;  
Implore him, live in him  
[This] is the highest happiness.  
O you beloved, [may] Jesus drive you.  
May your whole heart be consecrated.

**p. 24**

Look over there at a field in the spring;  
Enter at the time of its colorful blooming;  
Where is there in the garden and in the wooded area  
A leaflet like no other?  
Yet the rose quarrels not with the carnation,

Nor the oak with the beech tree.  
Both know: we bloom and wither  
In gentle sunlight.

**Bible Questions**

What is the name of the man whom the Lord answered out of a storm?

To whom did Isaiah say: "Put your house in order, for you will die and not remain living?"

Who was it that said, "but I and my house will serve the Lord?"

What was the name of the man whose staff flowered/bloomed green and [who] carried sheaves?  
Who considered iron as straw and brass as decayed wood?  
Which prophet tried to excuse himself from that which was assigned to him to do because he was not well prepared?

**Following p. 24 are inserted four pages from a slightly smaller-sized copybook. These pages list the names and vital statistics of some of the people who were buried in the Amish Mennonite Cemetery near Colfax in Fairfield County, Ohio. Jonathan Zook lived here from about 1833 to about 1877. The names and vital statistics were probably copied from tombstone inscriptions.**

**Graves in our graveyard in Fairfield County, Ohio****First page of tombstone inscriptions**

MAGDALENA TROYER died 1844; 16 yrs., 11 mo., 20 days old.

MARIA JODER died July 26, 1844; 30 years old.

HEINRICH STUTZMANN died Sept. 22, 1845; 52 yrs., 5 mo., 28 days old.

LYDIA STUTZMANN died Nov. 26, 1847; 16 yrs., 5 mo., 24 days old.

DANIEL STUTZMAN died Dec. 27, 1847; 47 yrs., 6 mo., 28 day old.

PETER ZUG died Aug. 28, 1844; 15 yrs., 1 mo., 11 days old.

NOAH STUTZMANN died Aug. 7, 1855; 24 yrs., 11 mo., 22 days old.

DAVID STUTZMANN died Sept. 25, 1855; 65 yrs., 5 mo., 6 days old.

LEAH STUTZMANN died Oct. 24, 1861; 38 yrs., 5 mo., 2 days old.

**Second page of tombstone inscriptions**

CHRISTIAN ZUG died Nov. 8, 1855; 50 yrs., 23 days old.

DAVID HERZLER died Feb. 23, 1855; 65 yrs., 11 mo., 22 days old.

BENJAMIN LANTZ died March 22, 1855; 21 yrs., 4 mo. old.

FRENI BEYLER died June 14, 1849; 23 yrs., 3 days old.

LYDIA, Jonathan STUTZMANN'S wife died Jan. 28, 1851; 20 yrs., 4 mo., 14 days old.  
JOHN STUTZMAN died Nov. 29, 1864; 79 yrs., 12 days old.  
BARBARA [STUTZMAN], his wife died March 24, 1867; 78 yrs., 9 mo. old.  
SARAH, Joseph KÖNIG'S wife died Nov. 23, 1863; 49 yrs., 4 mo., 21 days old.  
DAVID ZUG died Aug. 8, 1863; 83 yrs., 4 mo., 14 days old.  
ANN [ZUG], his wife died Feb. 11, 1868; 90 yrs., 10 days old.  
FRENI HERZLER died Nov. 4, 1868; 77 yrs., 3 mo., 12 days old.  
LEVI KÖNIG died Jan. 11, 1862; 19 yrs., 1 mo., 7 days old.  
REBECA KÖNIG died Feb. 9, 1864; 19 yrs., 1 mo., 15 days old.

#### Third page of tombstone. inscriptions

ELIZABETH MILLER died Oct. 15, 1861; 73 yrs., 6 [mo.], 2 days old.  
DAVID KURZ died Aug. 7, 1863; 22 yrs., 8 days old.  
ELIZABETH KÖNIG died March 28, 1867; 78 yrs., 6 mo., 6 days old.  
NOAH ZUG died July 4, 1866; 2 yrs., 7 mo., 29 days old.  
JOSEPH KÖNIG died Oct. 12, 1873; 64 yrs., 8 mo. old  
SÄLLY PLANK died Sept. 29, 1870; 66 yrs., 7 mo. old.  
BARBARA STUTZMANN died Dec. 8, 1871; 56 yrs., 10 mo., 16 days old.  
DAVID BEYLER died Dec. 21, 1871; 77 yrs., 3 [mo.], 12 days old.  
JOSEPH KÖNIG, JR. died Dec. 20, 1875; 29 yrs., 6 [mo.], 8 days old.  
DANIEL SCHLABACH died 1874.  
EMME BARNTREGER [died] Sept. 22, 1878; 21 yrs., 21 days old.  
JACOB TROYER in Wayne Co. died Nov. 23, 1877; 77 yrs., 3 mo., 17 days old.  
ISAAC LANZ in Noble Co., Ind., died April 1, 1875; 48 yrs., 3 mo., 19 days old.  
SEM KÖNIG in Laure[n]ce Co., Pa., died Sept. 16, 1876; 57 years old.

#### Fourth page of tombstone. inscriptions

SAMUEL PLANK, in Logan Co., [Ohio,] died Dec. 11, 1878; 70 yrs., 4 mo., 21 days old.  
Uncle SAMUEL LANZ in Champaign Co., [Ohio,] died March 11, 1870; 70 yrs., 10 mo., 20 days old.  
Uncle SOLOMON LANZ in Noble Co., Ind., died April 4, 1870; 64 yrs., 2 mo., 24 days old.  
LYDIA YODER in Cass Co., Mo. died Feb. 8, 1864; 48 yrs., 1 mo., 10 days old.

SUSANNA HERZLER died Oct. 17, 1865; 53 yrs, 11 mo., 23 days old.  
DAVID ZUG in McLean Co., Ill., died July [Jule] 10, 1872; 64 yrs., 5 mo., 27 days old.  
SAMUEL ZUG died in Noble Co., Ind.  
JACOB ZUG in Elkhart Co., Ind., died Jan. 9, 1880; 60 yrs, 11 mo., 13 days old.  
SARAH STUTZMANN in Elkhart Co., Ind., died Dec. 10, 1879; 84 yrs., 5 mo., 21 days old.  
BARBARZ ZUG died Feb. 14, 1880; 66 [yrs.], 3 mo., 10 days old. 

—Paton Yoder, Goshen, Ind., known for his work on Amish and Amish Mennonites, has most recently produced, Proceedings of the Amish Ministers' Meetings, 1862-1878, with Steven R. Estes (Mennonite Historical Society, 1999)

(This copybook is in the possession of David and Janet Yoder, Middlebury, Indiana)

(Continued from page 16)

issue featured articles on Anabaptism by Peter Stucky, Sleeping Preachers by Melvin Gingerich, an address given by I.W. Royer at the 1963 Sunday school centennial, West Liberty, Ohio, a letter from the John F. Funk collection on the Wisler schism of 1872. In subsequent issues reader responses, "News and Notes," and book reviews were added. Editor Gross expanded the magazine from eight to twelve pages.

The *Mennonite Historical Bulletin* was first published in 1940 as a four-page quarterly. J. C. Wenger was the editor. Its purpose was to "keep its readers informed of current progress in Mennonite historical study; to provide a channel for brief articles dealing with the history of our denomination; to review briefly the current publications in this field; to provide an opportunity for the publication of questions and answers dealing with congregational, church, or family history; to make note of articles dealing with Mennonite history in current periodicals; and to serve as a channel of communication between historical workers. The first issue was mailed to "a large number of ministers and other prospective supporters." Melvin Gingerich, who joined the editorial staff in 1945 was the longest serving editor. As co-editor and then editor, Gingerich edited the paper twenty-six years.

This periodical and its previous editors have served the church well. We want to build on that honorable tradition, as we find new and fresh ways to serve Mennonite Church USA, as well as our broad network of regional historians. 

—John E. Sharp, editor

# The Back Page

You have in your hand the last issue using the current design. With the July issue we will launch a new design—crisp, white paper, green color, new logo, more visuals, and more open space. The new design will link the historical to the contemporary, the juxtaposition we strive for in much of our programming.

Editor Levi Miller initiated the current design with the January 1991

issue. This design which also added four additional pages to the customary twelve, reflected the “New Directions” mandate to take our heritage “to the people in the pew.” The January issue carried articles on the arrival of Amish Mennonites in Elkhart by Russell Krabill, the necessary linkage of social history and church history by Janeen Bertsche Johnson, an introduction of the Illinois Mennonite Historical and

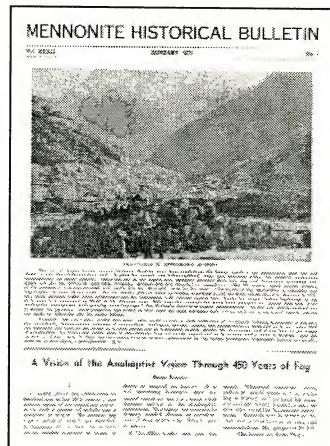
Genealogical Society by Levi Miller, a tribute to Noah C. Good by Glenn Lehman, a review of two dramas, book reviews, recent publications, news and notes, and a sampling of recent acquisitions to the archives by archivist Dennis Stoesz.

In its earlier incarnation, Leonard Gross was editor, beginning with the January 1971 issue. The eight-page

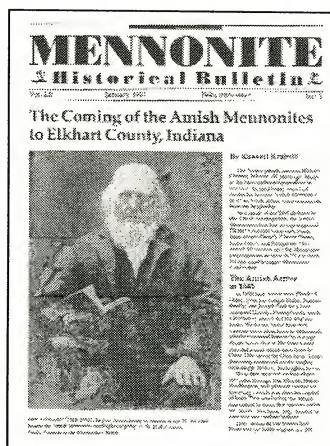
(Continued on page 15)



*The premier issue, April 1940*



*Editor Leonard Gross's first issue, January 1971*



*Levi Miller's new design, January 1991*

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## Mennonite Historical Bulletin

Mennonite Church USA Historical Committee  
1700 South Main Street  
Goshen, IN 46526-4794  
T: (574) 535-7477  
F: (574) 535-7756  
E: [archives@goshen.edu](mailto:archives@goshen.edu)  
W: [www.mcusa-archives.org](http://www.mcusa-archives.org)  
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Minding  
Mennonite  
Memory



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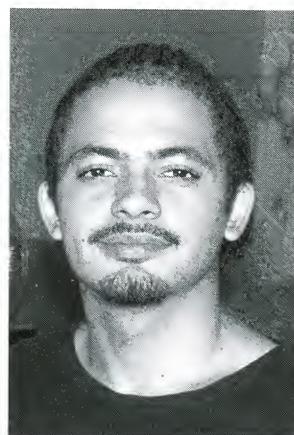


## Minding Mennonite Memory

**Cover:** The *Mennonite Historical Bulletin* has a new look. The new design is bright, crisp, and clean—a contemporary package for historical content. Our slogan, "Minding Mennonite Memory," reflects the church's call to pay attention to our heritage, and to provide historical context for current life.



**Page 3:** The black and white table that once served meals at the Mennonite House in Atlanta, Ga., has taken on mythic proportions as Mennonites get ready to meet in the southern city this summer. Here's the story.



**Pages 8-11:** History has a beat! Young rap artist, Curz Cordero, finds inspiration in stories of martyrdom.



**Pages 18-19:** Archives scrapbook pages from Goshen and North Newton feature conscientious objectors during WWI.



The *Mennonite Historical Bulletin* is published quarterly by the Mennonite Church USA Historical Committee and distributed to the members of Mennonite Church USA Historical Association.

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**Historical Committee:** Lee Roy Berry, Beth Graybill, Raylene Hinz-Penner, James Juhnke, Susan Fisher Miller, Kimberly Schmidt, Franklin Yoder (incoming chair), Nate Yoder (outgoing chair).

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Microfilms of Volumes I-L of the *Mennonite Historical Bulletin* are available from ProQuest Information and Learning, 300 N Zeeb Rd, PO Box 1346, Ann Arbor, MI 48106-1346.



Historical Committee

*Gathered around the table—half maple and half mahogany or cherry—the VS family “ate together ... worshiped together ... confessed our faults to one another, and sought to learn how really to bear each other’s burdens.”*

(All photographs are from the Mennonite Central Committee Photograph Collection, Mennonite Church USA Archives-Goshen, Ind.)



# From Fort Peachtree to Atlanta: The Mennonite story

by Sarah Kehrberg

The black and white table that once served meals at the Mennonite House in Atlanta, Ga., has taken on mythic proportions as Mennonites get ready to meet in the southern city this summer. It is the inspiration for the convention’s theme: “God’s Table Y’All Come.” Because the original table cannot be found, carpenters and artists from around the country are making similar ones to bring to the weeklong meeting and worship event. These divided yet unified tables will be symbols of a diverse church that is bonded in profound ways.

Of course, the original table’s history is not so neat and tidy. There were times of misunderstanding, petty fighting, and distrust in its past. But those eventually disappear leaving the surrounding unity, love, reconciliation, and best intentions that were present from the beginning.

And in truth, the table is only one part of the

larger Atlanta Mennonite story, which began half a century ago and continues today.

## From Fort Peachtree to Atlanta

Atlanta, Ga., is a young city by most standards. It began commonly enough as Fort Peachtree during the War of 1812. In 1825, the Creek Indians ceded over their lands to the State of Georgia, but the Cherokee Indians were not so easily persuaded. Despite widespread assimilation to European culture and customs, the Cherokee were forcibly removed from their Georgia lands in 1835 by the U.S. government, led by President Andrew Jackson, in the tragic Trail of Tears.

## Mennonite Voluntary Service

It took another 120 years or so for Mennonites to discover the city.

Eastern Mennonite Missions (EMM) of Lancaster Mennonite Conference had short-term Voluntary Service (VS) personnel serving in Atlanta sporadically in the 1950s,<sup>1</sup> but the

intentional outreach in the city began with Hershey and Norma Leaman.

The Leamans, longtime overseas missionaries, are generally credited by oral history as being among the first Mennonites to make Atlanta both their home and mission field. Hershey went to study in Atlanta in 1955, and the couple began to encourage EMM to start a Voluntary Service unit there.

From its beginning in October 15, 1958, the unit in Atlanta fit into the mission of the EMM Voluntary Service. This was to be a service opportunity for young adults of the Lancaster Conference, a resource of personnel from which to start a local congregation or support an already existing group, and general one-on-one outreach.<sup>2</sup> A fourth mission that emerged as the Vietnam War escalated and the government continued to draft its young men was the placement and administration of I-W men. In fact, in 1964, the Mission Board officially took over the Peace Committee (of Lancaster Conference) and merged it with the VS program under the name "Voluntary Service and I-W Committee." During the most vigorous years of the draft (roughly 1967-70) there were generally three to five couples in Atlanta, though single people also served. Almost all the men were I-W and worked in either the Grady Memorial Hospital or the Crawford Long Hospital.

In the 1972 Annual Report, Donald B. Kraybill, director of the Voluntary Service and I-W Committee wondered rhetorically if VS was necessary anymore since the draft call was so much lower than earlier years.<sup>3</sup> Kraybill, of course, was arguing for its continuing merit, but the Atlanta unit and others started in the war years, were eventually shut down in the mid-seventies.<sup>4</sup>

### A congregation is born

The unit was not a failure, however. A local church had been started and continues to the present day as Berea Mennonite Church. In support of the second mission of starting a local congregation, the Elvin Martin family moved to Atlanta as mission workers, also in 1958, to assist "the unit in their community outreach."<sup>5</sup> Already in the first year they developed a club and crafts program with the schoolchildren in their community and began conducting Sunday evening services, which were open to all.<sup>6</sup> In 1962, a church building was purchased and the first baptisms of new members celebrated.<sup>7</sup>

As the church grew to be more self-supporting, it "became evident the church feels that they do not need as many VSers as formerly in their area. There seems to be some fear that too many will stifle the growth of their local members."<sup>8</sup> Consequently, a second unit was opened in a different part of the city.<sup>9</sup> There were attempts to start additional churches both in Atlanta and in Albany, Ga., but neither was successful.

Berea Mennonite is credited as being one of the very first racially integrated churches in the city of Atlanta. Today Berea is a small church of 50-60 worshipers that even now is in the minority as a church where multiple skin colors, ethnicities, and backgrounds are represented. Former pastor Jonathan Larson quoted Martin Luther King Jr., when he said, "There is no more segregated hour in America than 11:00 a.m. on Sunday morning."

### The ministry of Vincent and Rosemarie Harding

Three years after the EMM first made an official presence in Atlanta, Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) also moved to town, though under different circumstances and with a varied mandate.



*Vincent and Rosemarie Harding worked "for racial reconciliation in an atmosphere of charged racial tension," but were "discouraged by the complacency of Mennonite communities they found in their travels."*

Vincent Harding was the associate pastor at Woodlawn Mennonite Church in Chicago when he and his wife, Rosemarie, a social worker, were invited by the Peace Section of MCC to move south and begin "an experimental project" in which "young people from our churches would come ... to serve without salary in Negro institutions ... not simply because we believe in desegregation, but more importantly because we believe that the way of Christ is the way of love and serve for and with all men." They would also serve as a "kind of roving peace representative" in an "attempt to help both Negro and white Christians to grasp a fuller meaning of the gospel of love in the midst of racial conflict."<sup>10</sup>

In October 1961 the Hardings took a move of faith and went to the chosen city of Atlanta. While Atlanta was in the South (and thus fully segregated), they believed it was "not of it." It had a

more liberal approach to race relations and “the Negro desegregation leadership (including King) are using it as a base.”<sup>11</sup> After buying a large building on Houston Street, which was dubbed “Mennonite House” by the Quakers who had a similar “Quaker House,” the Hardings settled into their new assignment.



*David Augsburger interviews Vincent Harding on the Mennonite Hour radio program, September 22, 1963.*

At the end of that first summer Vincent wrote, “The life of our family together at Mennonite House was one of the most meaningful parts of our experience in Atlanta.”<sup>12</sup> The 13 summer VSers came from all over the northern United States and Canada, included Mennonites and non-Mennonites, and ranged “in color from dark brown to light pink.”<sup>13</sup> They lived as a family, eating, working, and worshiping together. They “put Atlanta traffic in real difficulty just by appearing together in public day after day,” and because of their radically desegregated lifestyle had their phone tapped and the house under surveillance by the police.<sup>14</sup> The VSers served their purpose of working for racial reconciliation in an atmosphere of charged racial tension by quietly serving in black establishments as whites or vice versa.

In a news release written by Vincent and Rosemarie, they discussed the different VSers—Bill Cooper, a recently committed Christian from university in Toronto; Pauline who worked in

Martin Luther King Jr.’s Southern Christian Leadership Conference office; and Liz, a Southern Baptist, who had not realized the leaders of this program would be black and had trouble shaking Vincent’s hand on first meeting him, but gave hugs all around at the end of the summer. This was a powerful and intense time, and it was during this first heady summer that the magnanimous table was built.

The news release says that Bill and Vincent built it. They requested \$45 in June 1962 for the materials, wanting a “table large enough to seat us all.”<sup>15</sup> It was around this table, made half of a light, blond maple and half of dark mahogany or cherry, that “the family’s life centered. There we ate together, spilling over into long discussions. There we worshiped together. There we confessed our faults to one another, and sought to learn how really to bear each other’s burdens.”<sup>16</sup> They also shared the table with numerous guests of “every color.” These included the Peace Marchers, Coretta Scott King, various neighbors, and anyone else willing to share “with us the house of reconciliation.”<sup>17</sup>

The black and white table was used for several years, but eventually was lost. Efforts to locate it have not been successful.

After that first summer the stresses of staging a full-scale reconciliation war on racial segregation and maintaining the day-to-day operations of a rather large household of varying personalities started to take its toll.

The VS unit had problems getting I-W status from the National Service Board for Religious Objectors. The Board couldn’t “see [the Georgia State Director] sticking his neck out in an unproved situation. … The VS and

Peace Section proposal for Atlanta has not been proved … and is packed with dynamite (as well as with dynamic) with the south.”<sup>18</sup> This issue continued to make for tensions between the radical racial reconciliation agenda and the more practical need to place young Mennonite men in I-W service.

Money was a constant misunderstanding. It was never clear how much of the budget came from the Peace Section and how much from Voluntary Service. The VS director expected this unit to be self-supporting with the meager wages that the various volunteers made at their jobs.<sup>19</sup> But Mennonite House was also involved in costly projects: travel, hosting guests passing through the city, and civil rights organization work. Most letters from Akron (MCC headquarters) included some wonderment about how expenses could be kept down.

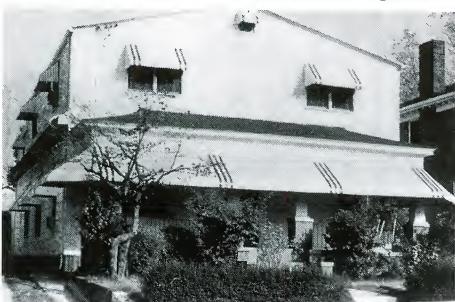
The Hardings traveled a great deal, which interrupted house life and took a toll on Vincent and Rosemarie. Part of Vincent’s assignment was, in fact, to travel to the various Mennonite communities talking about their work and vision in Atlanta. Both Vincent and Rosemarie also attended numerous conventions and conferences on civil rights and the southern struggle. They had close ties with Martin Luther King Jr. and other civil rights leaders and often were going to Birmingham or Montgomery or some other southern city to join in vigils or marches.

In the 18-month review of the program, “the Hardings recognize that to operate a Mennonite House … requires more time and guidance than they have been able to give it.” MCC leader-



*MCC VSer Antje Lijsbeth Koopmans from Holland with a preschool child.*

ship and the Hardings agreed, “there must be more clarity as to the role and function of Mennonite House.” Was it primarily a base for a VS unit that supported and ministered to the needs of the workers? Or was it a Christian fellowship that in its very nature served as a witness to the world and was able to “assimilate and minister to those who have spiritual and emotional needs and are searching for answers”?<sup>20</sup> These issues were never fully resolved. VS workers became more frustrated over extra guests that came and sometimes stayed for months around the large,



Mennonite House, 540 Houston Street, Atlanta.

welcoming table, and by the lack of organization in the House. The Hardings became frustrated with the lack of hospitality and commitment to the overall mission of racial reconciliation.

The Hardings were also at odds with the traditional Mennonite shovels and buckets model of peace and justice work. Vincent wrote, “As usual, John Yoder hit the nail on the head at our Peace Section Executive Committee meeting when he spoke about the uncomfortableness of the Mennonite church in involving itself in the midst of conflict and revolution rather than coming along later on to pick up the pieces.”<sup>21</sup> Edgar Stoesz echoed this in a statement on the goals and mission of the newly created Mennonite House: “As we refrained from participating in its annihilation, but helped later to reconstruct Germany, so we decline to participate in the interracial conflict

but seek rather to bring reconciliation and goodwill. This in no way indicates a passive attitude on the part of the church but rather selection of an area of the problem where our contribution, based on our understanding of the Scriptures and pertaining to human relationships, is most effective.”<sup>22</sup>

Vincent, however, saw things differently. Early on he wrote, “We need somehow to move away from the passivity suggested by our dependence on the phrase ‘nonresistance,’ to a new sense of involvement and participation implied in the term ‘peacemakers.’”<sup>23</sup> He recognized that this meant risk and the danger of “finding ourselves with strange bedfellows (perhaps on a prison floor), or of making common cause with those whose ultimate convictions are not exactly the same as our own.”<sup>24</sup> But given the daily reality of the Negro in the south in 1962, he never doubted that it was worth the risks.

Putting this belief into practice, Vincent was arrested as part of a public protest in Albany, Ga., just 160 miles south of Atlanta. Just months after their arrival in Atlanta, Vincent and Rosemarie had gone to Albany, where more than 700 people were arrested for protesting segregation. Over the months, they stayed in touch with the situation, with Vincent serving as a mediator between “the mayor, police, segregationists, Negro leaders, white and Negro ministers.”<sup>25</sup> He was jailed in Albany on July 23, 1962, after refusing to cease praying and move of the City Hall grounds. MCC sent bail money, and although they allowed that the decision needed to made in the “context of Albany,” they encouraged Vincent that his “particular calling … could be better exercised out of jail rather than in.”<sup>26</sup> Vincent ended up spending three days behind bars when “requests from Dr. Martin Luther King and from Police

Chief Pritchett [a white] brought him out with the chief, himself, signing the security for the bond.”<sup>27</sup>

MCC tried to be supportive of Vincent’s arrest, but acknowledged that the constituency would raise questions.<sup>28</sup> MCC continued to ask the Hardings not align themselves closely with non-church groups.<sup>29</sup>

And finally, the Hardings were discouraged by the complacency of Mennonite communities they found in their travels. Not only were many “totally unaware” of segregation and racial injustice in their own backyard, but they didn’t think there was anything they could do, picketing, boycotting, and other forms of protest being seen as inappropriate for a nonresistant pacifist.<sup>30</sup>

### The end of an era

In the fall of 1964, the Hardings took a six-month leave of absence from Mennonite House. Vincent was working on his doctoral dissertation, and they needed a break. They never went back.

Six months later, in April 1965, J. Winfield Fretz was sent to Atlanta to review the program and make recommendations for the future. He ended up suggesting strongly that the unit remain, but its energies should be di-



Interracial Bible school teaching team, 1963.

rected towards the need for quality, affordable daycare centers in their communities. Fretz wrote that the interracial service was multi-sided. It was "more than fighting directly for civil rights now." He felt that MCC's "reputation, image and genius is that of a Christian bridge building agency."<sup>31</sup>

### Conclusion

Though MCC's active role in civil rights lasted only four years, the work at Mennonite House was powerful. The Hardings introduced the Mennonite Church to a more activist position before the Vietnam War protests and riots began in earnest.

The black and white table of Mennonite House is no longer in use, but the spirit lives on. The sharp contrast and uniqueness of white and black still exists, but so does the spirit of unity—in Berea Mennonite Church, in Atlanta Mennonite Fellowship (started in the early 1990s), in Celebration Fellowship (an Eastern Mennonite Missions church plant in 1995), and in the greater Mennonite Church, we trust for years to come. ☮



**Sarah Kehrberg,**  
Lexington, Kentucky,  
is an editor at Herald  
Press. She graduated  
from Bethel College,  
North Newton, Kans.,  
with majors in music  
and history.

- <sup>1</sup>EMBMC 1953 Annual Report, p. 16. Mennonite Church USA Archives-Goshen (MCA-G), II-8, Box 3.
- <sup>2</sup>EMBMC 1964 Annual Report, p. 17, MCA-G, II-8, Box 4.
- <sup>3</sup>EMBMC 1972 Annual Report, MCA-G.
- <sup>4</sup>In the EMBMC 1977 Annual Report there is no mention of VS unit in Georgia.
- <sup>5</sup>EMBMC 1958 Annual Report, n.p. MCA-G, II-8, Box 3.
- <sup>6</sup>EMBMC 1959 Annual Report, n.p. MCA-G, II-8, Box 3.
- <sup>7</sup>EMBMC 1962 Annual Report, MCA-G.
- <sup>8</sup>Southern Administrative Trip, December 1-23, 1966, p. 10. MCA-G, II-8, Box 4.
- <sup>9</sup>EMBMC 1966 Annual Report, p. 29. MCA-G, II-8, Box 4.
- <sup>10</sup>Letter from Vincent and Rosemarie Harding to Elmer Neufeld, Peace Section, MCC (18 January 1961) and attached "Report to the Church Council" by Vincent Harding. MCA-G, Folder: Vincent Harding 1961, IX-6, 3.99.
- <sup>11</sup>Report of Harding, Neufeld, Stoesz: Nashville-Atlanta Trip (13-17 August 1961). MCA-G, IX-6, 3.98.
- <sup>12</sup>Letter to Claude Boyer, MCC Voluntary Service from Vincent Harding (1 October 1962). MCA-G, IX-6, 3.100.
- <sup>13</sup>Letter to friends (October 1962). MCA-G, IX-6, 3.100.
- <sup>14</sup>Ibid.
- <sup>15</sup>Report of Receipts and Disbursements (June 1962). MCA-G, IX-6-3.100.
- <sup>16</sup>"Servants on the Hillside," by Vincent and Rosemarie Harding (23 October 1962), MCA-G, MCC News Service.
- <sup>17</sup>Ibid.
- <sup>18</sup>Letter to Elmer Neufeld, MCC Peace Section from J. Harold Sherk, NSBRO (13 September 1961). MCA-G, IX-6, 3.98.
- <sup>19</sup>Letter to Vincent Harding from Claude F. Boyer (19 September 1962). MCA-G, IX-6, 3.100.
- <sup>20</sup>Letter to Vincent Harding from Edgar Metzler (18 March 1963). MCA-G, IX-6, 3.102.
- <sup>21</sup>Letter to Edgar Metzler from Vincent Harding (6 July 1963). MCA-G, IX-6, 3.102.
- <sup>22</sup>Report of Harding, Neufeld, Stoesz: Nashville-Atlanta Trip (13-17 August 1961). MCA-G, IX-6, 3.98.
- <sup>23</sup>Letter to Elmer Neufeld, MCC Peace Section from Vincent Harding (2 January 1962). MCA-G, IX-6, 3.100.
- <sup>24</sup>Ibid.
- <sup>25</sup>Letter to Edgar Metzler, MCC Peace Section from Vincent and Rosemarie Harding (11 May 1962). MCA-G, IX-6, 3.100.
- <sup>26</sup>Letter to Vincent Harding from Edgar Metzler (26 July 1962). MCA-G, IX-6, 3.100.
- <sup>27</sup>Letter to friends (October 1962). MCA-G, IX-6, 3.1000.
- <sup>28</sup>Letter to Vincent Harding from Edgar Metzler (26 July 1962) MCA-G, IX-6, 3.100.
- <sup>29</sup>Letter to Vincent Harding from Edgar Metzler (26 April 1963): pg. 2. MCA-G, IX-6, 3.102.
- <sup>30</sup>Letter to Milton Lehman, MCC Peace Section from Vincent Harding (21 June 1962). MCA-G, IX-6, 3.100.
- <sup>31</sup>Report and Recommendations Re MCC Future Voluntary Service Unit in Atlanta by J. Winfield Fretz (18-24 April 1965). MCA-G, IX-6, 3.106.

**Passionate resonance, cont. from page 9**  
going when the road ahead looked impossible.

"He now mentors two or three young friends in Florida. They are where he was a number of years ago and he wants them so badly to see what they need to do to grow. So the baton is passed on to Cruz, and he is beginning to mentor others."

Cordero has gained a prophet's voice, as well as ideas for rap lyrics, from his connection to the martyrs. His mentoring is full of the passion of someone who has known the emptiness of the streets and wants people to embrace the fullness of Christ.

"What people need most is not to be tutored, counseled or lectured," Cordero said. "What they need is a conversion, redemption. People aren't wounded by sin. They are dead in sin. Men and women need a resurrection if they want a relationship with God."

"And I think the early Anabaptists have a lot to tell us about not taking the teachings of Jesus Christ lightly, but applying the Sermon on the Mount and the Beatitudes. It's not only a belief in creed, it's a belief in practice." ☮



**Laurie L. Oswald** is news service director for Mennonite Church USA.

*Cruz Cordero, Christian rap artist with Naomi and Freeman Miller, his mentors.*

(Credit: Laurie L. Oswald)



## Passionate resonance: Cruz Cordero meets Dirk Willems

by Laurie L. Oswald

**T**welve years ago, Cruz Cordero felt the fires of suffering as his family broke apart and he searched for belonging on the streets of North Philadelphia.

Today, Jesus Christ is transforming those ashes into a life of beauty, Christian rap music and the testimony of a 28-year-old young man who finds courage in the stories of the early Anabaptist martyrs to live his life as passionately as they lived theirs.

When he was a teenager his mother left his father, a gifted artist who got involved in drugs and alcohol and turned abusive in the home. That brought betrayal to Cordero, who had experienced a relatively stable home and a father who cared. His mother and two small sisters moved to Florida, while Cordero and his older sister stayed in the city and roamed from temporary home to temporary home.

Like a prodigal, he searched for a home in the hip hop culture and answers to his questions

about who he was and why he was here. But he found no answers, until the day he ran across a Mennonite girl listening to Christian rap. That's when he felt for the first time that there was a God who would understand his songs, his pain, his dreams.

"I was asking God why I was suffering so much, when I met Rhonda Miller, a girl at the High School for Performing Arts where we both attended, who was listening to a headset. I asked what she was listening to and she told me 'Christian rap.' I didn't even know such a thing existed."

"She handed me the headset and when I listened, I heard words and music that spoke my language, a God who spoke my language. For the first time in my life, I felt that I had God's undivided attention."

Since that time, God has turned Cordero's trials into a faith of gold. He is now a rap musician and college student in St. Petersburg, Fla.,

and is connecting in good ways again with his family. His dreams are go to Bible school and into full-time ministry in Philadelphia, where he hopes to teach at a learning center being developed by the Cross Movement Ministries. It ministers to youth and young adults in the hip hop culture.

The transformation began after Miller, the daughter of Naomi and Freeman Miller, longtime Mennonite leaders in the city, invited Cordero to the Diamond Street Mennonite Church youth group. That's where he became a Christian at age 16 and experienced the love and support of mentors such as the Millers and other church family. Freeman Miller is the former pastor of Diamond Street and bishop for the Lancaster Mennonite Conference churches in the city.

As Cordero spent time in the Miller's home, their mentoring enabled him to struggle through years of learning difficulties at school and emotional difficulties in relationships. But over the years, Christ has helped him to push through these obstacles and to write the kind of Christian rap music that reaches the kind of youth he once was, he said.

After he graduated from high school in 1995, he joined the Cross Movement, a Philadelphia-based Christian rap group that brings the gospel through rap to the city streets across the United States and Jamaica. The stories he heard for the first time at Diamond Street about the early Anabaptists martyrs have resonated with his own story.

"I draw a lot of encouragement from those martyrs," Cordero said. "Whatever I've had to go through, their fires were hotter than mine. Their lives were a reflection of not only what we have to go through but also a reflection of what we can be if we allow those fires to purge us and be a reminder of the peace that can be ours in Jesus Christ."

The intensity of Cordero's testimony shone bright as gold the night he shared a Christian rap song, "Onward Martyrdom," that he wrote and performed for the audience April 4 at a conference, "Philadelphia Stories:

Kingdom-Building in the City." As he moved to the strong beat of the music, people heard his cries and those of the martyrs. He poured his emotions into pulsating street poetry depicting the lives of such martyrs as Dirk Willems.

He sang, "Facing execution this man was willing/ to extend a helping hand to the man pursuing him/ to do him in, so those rulers can ruin him/'cause was an Anabaptist who was walking in unison/with the person of Christ, immersed in his life/obeying his sermon is what turned him into a furnace of light."

Naomi and Freeman Miller were two people in the audience who felt particular joy over seeing God's love and light burst into bold testimony through this young man, who has become their spiritual son. Cordero received a standing ovation at the April 3-5 conference focusing on the multiracial Mennonite community in the city.

Cordero is quick to recognize the Millers as his spiritual parents, as well.

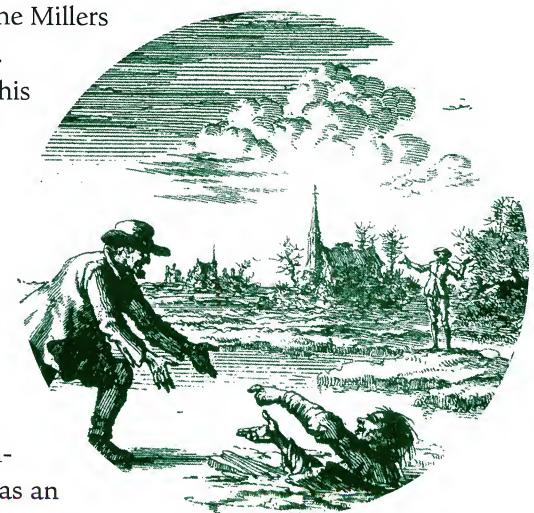
"God has used them to reflect his love, and I am so grateful," he said. "God has bestowed his love on them, and they have chosen to bestow it on me. We all need to be embraced and loved by people, as well as by God."

That love has taken firm root, as he is now an example to others, Naomi Miller said. "Cruz has an amazing inner strength and determination—he never quits," she said. "We have learned so much from him about perseverance in difficult times. His unshakable commitment to Christ and to the Anabaptist vision has grown very deep roots. ....

"He reminds me a bit of an oak tree sapling, which, after a long period of almost imperceptible growth, becomes an unshakable solid tree. Cruz is like that oak tree. We could not grow for him. He is the one who did the wrestling with God, trusted him and kept on

*...continued on page 7*

**"...their fires were  
hotter than mine. Their  
lives were a reflection  
of not only what we  
have to go through  
but also a reflection  
of what we can be if  
we allow those fires  
to purge us and be a  
reminder of the peace  
that can be ours in  
Jesus Christ."**



**Dirk Willems, 1569 martyr:  
"Facing execution this  
man was willing/ to ex-  
tend a helping hand to the  
man pursuing him/ to do  
him in, so those rulers can  
ruin him/'cause was an  
Anabaptist who was walk-  
ing in unison/with the per-  
son of Christ, immersed in  
his life/obeying his sermon  
is what turned him into a  
furnace of light."**



## Onward Martyrdom

by Cruz Cordero

### Verse 1:

Let's take a look into this book called the Martyrs Mirror,  
a reflection of stories that can draw y'all nearer,  
closer to glory of the Prince of Peace.

Having war cease from Italy to Middle East to Philly streets,  
it's really deep how Jesus keeps his peeps meek,  
and yet, he keeps us strong, the word he speaks is bond.

He'll never leave us nor forsake us;  
he'll take us in his arms and he'll lead us on.

His peace will keep us calm,  
so come along as we journey in honor of  
the many men and women, empowered by the power of  
God's love; it gotta to be a part of us  
if we're called his followers, this love should be synonymous  
with our lives not just our lips.

It's time to get fanatical with this gift that God gives;  
if this love is in you, then you would do what Dirk did;  
Dirk Willems, that is, a true servant, who worked his  
faith out, by putting his life on the line.

What was Dirk thinking? It was Christ on his mind.  
What was Dirk drinking? It was a special kind of wine,  
instrumental for the mental, giving sight to the blind;  
a living light that shines bright, like the sunshine.

Man, if I can just sum this up in just one rhyme.

But anyway, let's get back to Dirk Willems:  
A Christian imprisoned for the faith that he was living,  
facing execution, this man was willing  
to extend a helping hand to the man pursuing him  
to do him in, so those rulers can ruin him;  
'cause he was an Anabaptist who was walking in unison  
with the person of Christ, "immersed" in his life,  
obeying his sermon is what turned him to a furnace of light.

Those merciless magistrates full of malice and hate  
murdered this servant Dirk by burning him at the stake.

A lingering death he suffered at a slow pace,  
but his faith was steadfast, his soul was shown grace;  
into the hands of God, he commended his whole fate.  
A showcase of his faith is what makes this story great,

but the object of his faith, makes the story better,  
so all praise and all glory goes to the Creator.

### Chorus:

All praise and all glory to the Prince of Peace.  
All these stories are testimonies of what peace can reach;  
Without his fingerprints in each, each story wouldn't teach  
such remarkable faith in the face of evil beasts.

Historically, history is his story;  
God gets all the glory, you should just ignore me,  
and strictly get in awe with this sovereign God,  
who's calling all of y'all to have y'all all involved  
in his purpose and plan  
for this revolving ball.  
You should worship this Lamb;  
he's such a flawless God.  
Take a permanent stand,  
you won't fall real hard;  
take it personal and  
take the gospel far.

### Verse 2:

Let's continue with this next verse,  
let us converse with the past,  
let's us grasp what we can learn from these excerpts.

Historical records are not just for the experts;  
they're there for those who want to learn without lectures.

Now let's search Scriptures, let's us remember  
that we're members of the urban church,  
serving like the servant Dirk;  
thermostats on the map, instead of thermometers,  
regulating earth's temperatures,  
instead of changed by her common errs.  
I'm kind of irked by the lack of servanthood;  
we need to practice what we preach,  
and not just word it good.

We should be working the hood, like my homie Tom Skinner,  
who was a gangster, but thanks to Christ,  
Tom was made a winner.

He went from the Harlem lords to the sovereign Lord.  
Tom Skinner was a peacemaker, stopping war.  
Stop and pause, let's talk about some other martyrs:  
sons and daughters, who were slaughtered  
like lambs on an altar.

We ought to be salt and light, walking with Christ.  
We need to act accordingly, and not just talk real nice;  
be like Margaretha and Michael, true disciples,

brutally executed by self righteous psychos.  
 Michael's tongue was sliced off, it wasn't nice y'all;  
 parts of his body was twice torn by hot tongs.  
 And what about his wife? This women was not soft;  
 she was later bound and tossed in a river and what for?  
 For believing Jesus, for obeying his teachings?  
 For seeking to please him? Yes, those were the reasons.  
 Even if they were heathens, is this how we treat them?  
 or do we lead them to Jesus by repeating Ephesians  
 6: 10-17, by any means,  
 put on the armor of God and give praise to Elohim

**Chorus:**

Repeats

**Verse 3:**

In conclusion, let us all turn our attention  
 to innumerable amounts of men and women unmentioned;  
 to the many heat-takers and the many peacemakers;  
 to those who took heed of being Jesus imitators,  
 like Kelifa and Keros, Ethiopian heroes,  
 two leaders of a church known as the Meserete Kristos,  
 meaning Christ the foundation, Christ the solid rock;  
 the socket that connects us to the power of God.  
 He's the Potter, you're not, every hour you got  
 is under total control, keeping your mindset locked,  
 reproducing Menno Simons, even out of hip hop.  
 As the clock goes tick tock, God is never going to stop  
 given' us lots of guts like Felix Manz and Hans Hut;  
 plus, life minus Christ sucks, there is no success;  
 without Jesus, life is just a bunch of meaningless;  
 it's like a sniper aiming at nothing and always hitting it.  
 Are you getting it? If not, then peep Elizabeth Dirks;  
 just listen to her story and get with its worth;  
 like in heaven, do the Father's will on this earth;  
 give him reverence, thank him for your spiritual rebirth.

**Chorus:**

Be Encouraged!

*Cruz Corderro, Tampa, Florida, uses rap as a Christian ministry. He grew up in Philadelphia as a spiritual son of Freeman and Naomi Miller. As an expression of his commitment to Anabaptist/Mennonite faith, he began writing this rap. An invitation to present this at the Philadelphia Stories conference gave him the incentive to finish it.*

**Mennonite handshakes**

by Jep Hostetler



Jep Hostetler

Atlanta 2003. The Mennonites are coming! The Mennonites are coming! That means the universal Western symbol of friendship, the handshake—or shall we say handshakes—will be seen, and felt, everywhere two people meet and greet. There will be no holy kisses, at least on the adult side of the convention. Handshakes are the order of the day. What kind of shaker are you?

First, there is the “**dead fish**” handshake. It feels like you have just shaken hands with a dead fish. Not that many of us have actually shaken a dead fish, but we can imagine how it feels. This handshake says, “I’m actually humbler than you. I am the humblest Mennonite there is.” Or it may simply mean, “I really do not want to hurt you,” or “I’m very shy.”

Then there is the “**top-loader**” handshake. This hand comes at you with palm down. Look out. You must supplicate yourself to this hand by turning your palm upward. Many times the owner of this style of handshake will place his or her other hand from beneath yours and hold it between his or her two hands, sometimes even patting your hand. The power of this handshake is obvious. You must be subordinate to this palm-down shaker.

How about the Mennonite “**farmer’s**” handshake? This is a strong, firm handshake. It can be owned by anyone who does hard physical labor with his or her hands. It is firm, complete, solid, and well timed. It is the straightforward handshake, with a modest amount of gusto. You may even smell a hint of HTH, the universal udder disinfectant. Refreshing.

Then there is the “**vise-grip**” encounter. You cannot get away, even if you wanted to. Your hand is held in a vise grip and you may even feel the opposite hand clasping your left shoulder. This handshake will send people with arthritis through the roof. It is the most painful handshake, and is almost exclusively the domain of Mennonite men, particularly church leaders, insurance salesmen, and televangelists.

Then there is the “**finger grabber**.” “I’ll just grab your fingers before you can consummate a full-fledged, all-the-way-to-my-thumb-pad handshake.” This handshake says, “I will

...continued on page 13

*John S. Zimmerman, back row, third from left.* (Credit: Diane Zimmerman Umble)



# I wish I'd been there: Grange le Comte, France, 1919

by Diane Zimmerman Umble

**F**ourteen young men look into the camera on a faded postcard captioned "2<sup>nd</sup> Causal Company, Ft. Hamilton, N.Y. June 8, 1918." My grandfather, John S. Zimmerman (1893-1970), stands in the back row, wearing a battered felt hat and a broad grin. Grandpa was one of over fifty Mennonite conscientious objectors who joined the American Friends Service Committee to bring relief and reconstruction to devastated communities in France near the end of and following the First World War.

I wish I been with him on his journey. I would have liked to see his face when on January 12, 1919; passengers sighted a whale on the voyage from New York to Liverpool. What an adventure the train ride to Paris must have been for this earnest young Mennonite from Rothsville, Pa. Grandpa was assigned to the *équipe* at Grange le Comte, a large rural estate in the Verdun sector, along with a large contingent of English and American Quakers and a handful of Mennonites. By March 1919, he was chief wireman in the electrical depart-

ment. By day, he rode a specially equipped motorcycle throughout the countryside, rebuilding telephone and electrical wires. At night, he was night operator at the powerhouse, responsible for keeping watch over the generators.

At a desk in the powerhouse, he often wrote letters to E. Elmira Hess, a young woman back home in Brunnerville, who had promised to share news from the boys in France with the Young People's Meeting at Ephrata Mennonite Church. His letters to Elmira describe his work, his travel, and, most of all, his questions about what God requires of Mennonites of his generation.

Periodically, the Mennonites serving in France had opportunities to gather. On one occasion, some forty met.

"We aim to sustain our religious life by frequent meetings such as was held March 30, 1919, in a shell torn chateau near Neuville, France. It was truly inspirational, for so large

a group of us in common faith had not had the privilege of meeting since leaving for military camp. From our discussion here and small previous meetings, five important problems may be deduced among others which we hope to discuss at a 2 day conference to be held near Verdun about June 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup>. Will you not favor us with your frank opinion and judgment as God reveals it on these matters.

1. The relation of the individual to the church.
  2. Should the church at large or a few individuals control the activities of the church.
  3. What should be the church's attitude toward her present educational institutions and toward Christian education.
  4. Should the church interest herself in an aggressive social and mission program for the world.
  5. Should the young people of the church be trusted to effect some permanent organization aiming toward annual open conference ... with a view of acting on their religious convictions."
- (Letter dated April 10, 1919)

I wish I could have heard these discussions. In one of his early letters he wrote, "The church is in need of both young men and women who can say I am willing to do my part. I am looking forward to a great missionary epoch in the history of the Mennonite church." The boys in France had visions for the future. They were passionate in their deliberations, and they wanted their peers at home to test these visions along with them. Grandpa's five important problems resonate with contemporary challenges facing the church. I wonder how he would answer his questions today. ☘



*Diane Zimmerman Umble is professor and chair in the department of communication and theatre at Millersville University.*

*She is author of Holding the Line: The Telephone in Old Order Mennonite and Amish Life, and co-editor of Strangers at Home: Amish and Mennonite Women in History.*

### Mennonite handshakes *cont. from page 11*

not be vulnerable to you. As long as I can grab your fingers before you make it home, I can control the handshake, and maybe even you." It may also say, I'm protecting myself from the vise-grip.

Also there is the "gotcha" handshake. It is all about timing. As one shakes your hand, he or she notices whether or not you are a hugger. As your hand is being shaken, you are physically being drawn toward the other person. Then you are encircled by a one-arm hug as his or her other hand is shaking yours. So you have the shake-my-hand, pull-me toward-you, one-armed-hug type of encounter. You've been "squashed" by a gotcha!

Last, but definitely not least is the "secret Mennonite handshake". This handshake was invented so that underground Mennos could recognize each other with a handshake. By shaking hands, while at the same time placing one's thumb on top of the other's first knuckle and pressing gently, you have given the secret sign that you are a Menno. Of course, it is so secret that not all Mennonites have heard about it. And one other thing, you may not use this secret handshake unless you have been cleared by the ethics committee of the Mennonite Church USA and you adhere to the strict rules of the tribe. To tell the truth, it has not caught on in most circles, perhaps because I made it up. ☘

*Jep Hostetler, Columbus, Ohio, is a humorist and, an associate professor emeritus at the Ohio State University College of Medicine. He and his wife Joyce serve as staff persons for the Mennonite Medical Association. Be sure to classify Jep's handshake at Atlanta.*

# Scrapbook page, Goshen

by Dennis Stoesz, Archivist



Conscientious objectors at Camp Pike, Little Rock, Ark., August 11, 1918. Of a total of twenty-two C.O.s, fifteen were Mennonite, five were Quakers, and two were International Bible students.

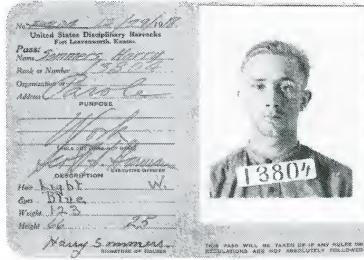
(C. L. Graber Photograph Collection)

C.O.s at Camp Lewis, Wash., November 18, 1918. There are four known Mennonites in the group: Earl McTimmonds, Sheridan, Ore. (back row, third from right); John Kropf, Harrisburg, Ore. (back row, fourth from right); Homer Schlagel, Albany, Ore. (middle row, fourth from right); and Orie M. Conrad, later of Albany Ore. (middle row, far right). Conrad refused to train and wear the army uniform. As a consequence, he was nearly hanged, saved at the last minute by his commanding officer.

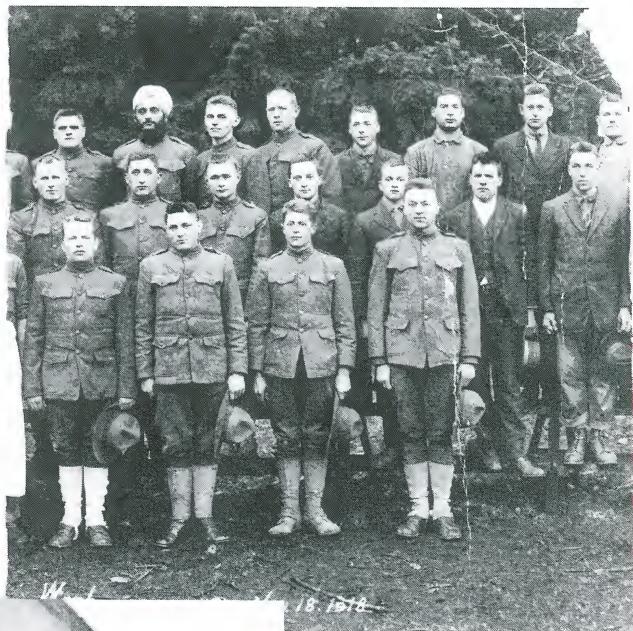
Conrad's tormenters were court-martialed. (Orie M. Conrad Collection)



Two C.O.s at Fort Riley, Kans. The African American is likely Louis Irvin, a member of the Church of God, Chicago, Ill. On right is Chris Graber, a Mennonite from Washington, Iowa. (C.L. Graber Photograph Collection)



Harry Sommers' (1894-1984) parole work pass from the prison at Fort Leavenworth, Kans., December 29, 1918. Sommers was drafted September 17, 1917, and sent to Camp Zachary Taylor, Kentucky. As a C.O., he was court-martialed for disobeying an order and sent to Leavenworth. He served his sentence from May 24, 1918, to January 27, 1919. (Harry Sommers Collection)



Mennonite C.O.s, Camp Sherman, Chillicothe, Ohio. Those identified are:

Harvey Hartzler (back row, far right); Sam Stuckey (front row, middle); and Philemon Frey, Archbold, Ohio (front row, far right). (Philemon Frey Collection)

# Scrapbook page, North Newton

by John D. Thiesen, Archivist



Most Mennonites from Kansas ended up at Camp Funston, now part of Fort Riley, still an active military base in north central Kansas. Here a group of Mennonite C.O.s from central Kansas is eating lunch at Detention Camp No. 1, Camp Funston. Left to right: Carl Schmidt, William P. Wiens, Pete Neufeld, Albert Unruh, John Andreas, Paul Bartsch.



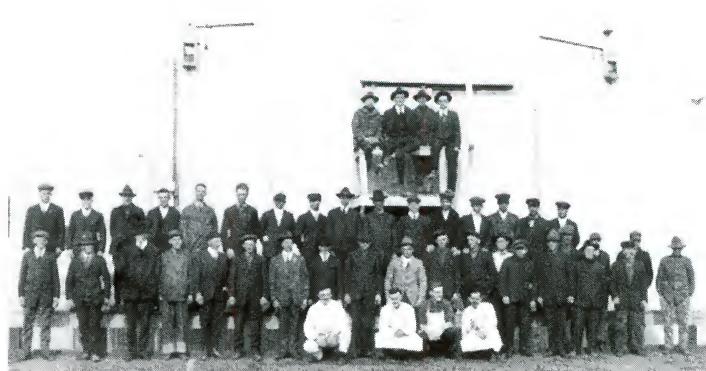
Minding  
Mennonite  
Memory



Kitchen crew of C.O.s, August 1918, at Camp Funston.



C.O.s waiting their turn for a hearing before the Board of Inquiry (probably at Camp Dodge, Iowa). Some C.O.s were furloughed to farm work if approved by the Board of Inquiry. Guards stand to the extreme left and right. (Henry Gaede Photograph Collection)



On the back of the photo is written "These are the C.O.s on Adams Ranch at Odebolt, Iowa. We were 47 C.O.s there from all over the USA. We came here from 163rd Depot Brigade Camp Dodge, Iowa in 1918, the 20th of Aug." (Photo originally from B. M. Ensz of Beatrice, Neb.)

## Minding Mennonite Memory

This July issue of our publication has a new look. The new design is bright, crisp, and clean—a contemporary package for historical content. This combination reflects our ministry of combining history and mission. We believe that each is enriched by the other, and each is impoverished without the other.

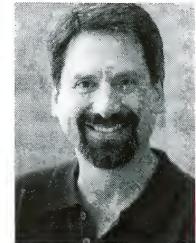
As a ministry of the Mennonite Church USA Executive Board, we are called to pay attention to our heritage. We are to find ways to preserve, interpret, and proclaim the church's faith stories. We preserve our heritage of faith by operating two denominational archives—Goshen, Ind., and North Newton, Kan. At the same time, we also want to strengthen regional heritage groups and interpretive centers by providing consultation and resources.

Visit our web site at [www.mcusa-archives.org](http://www.mcusa-archives.org)

We interpret and proclaim what God has done in our history, by publishing, speaking, storytelling, and planning conferences. Our most recent event was the *Philadelphia Stories* conference featured in this issue. A future conference focused on Native Americans is under consideration.

Our slogan, "Minding Mennonite Memory," reflects the church's call to pay attention to our heritage. It reflects the church's call to provide historical context for present day realities.

We can't do it alone! We need your help. Subscribe to the *Mennonite Historical Bulletin*. Give a subscription as a gift. Support our work with your generous contributions. Help us mind Mennonite memory!



*John E. Sharp, editor*



**Mennonite Historical Bulletin**

Mennonite Church USA Historical Committee  
1700 South Main Street  
Goshen, IN 46526-4794

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Minding  
Mennonite  
Memory

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# In this issue



**Page 6:** Winners—from the fourteen students who submitted papers for the annual John Horsch Mennonite History Essay Contest—are announced.



Lemuel So's workshop, "Pastoring Through Generational Transitions," was a part of the April 3-5 conference, "Philadelphia Stories: Kingdom Building in the City," sponsored by Mennonite Church USA Historical Committee and the Mennonite and Brethren in Christ churches in the city. See a photo essay on **pages 7-9.**



**Page 10:** Robert Charles reviews *The Missing Peace: The Search for Nonviolent Alternatives in United States History.*

**Pages 14-15:** This issue's Archives scrapbook features women's diaries.



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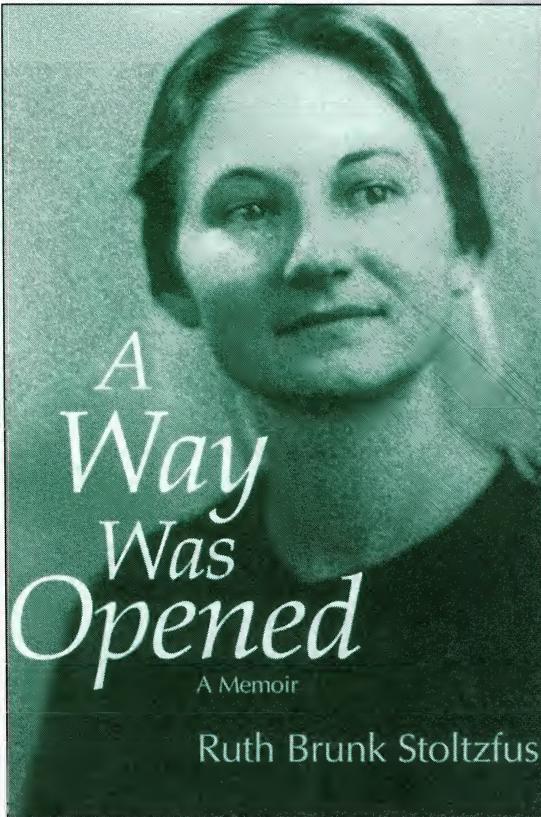
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Historical Committee



Dick saw her first.

"I've met the most extraordinary woman," he said. "She's like one of those old Quaker women you see at protests and peace marches—strong character, strong convictions. You've got to meet her!"

It took awhile for me to share my husband's enthusiasm for Ruth Brunk Stoltzfus. Dick had made connections with Grant Stoltzfus and other Mennonite historians soon after we moved to the Harrisonburg area in 1972, but I was at home with our two little boys and knew Grant and Ruth only second-hand, through Dick's reports, though once I heard them speak briefly at a public meeting.

When Grant died in July 1974, Dick and I attended the memorial service—our first experience of a service in a Mennonite church. We sat in the balcony, with a clear view of the family sitting on the front pews. What I remember most vividly from that evening was feeling amazed when Ruth rose to address the congregation from her pew, speaking at length about her marriage, even telling an anecdote about an argument over an air conditioner.

A few months later Dick and I, our two little boys, and our baby daughter began to attend

*This article is published jointly with Mennonite Life, the historical publication of Bethel College, North Newton, Kans. Mennonite Life is published online at <http://www.bethelks.edu/mennonitelife>.*

## Ruth and me

by Eve B. MacMaster

Park View Mennonite Church regularly, and I soon came face to face with Ruth. It was in the church basement after Sunday school; I was carrying baby Sarah in my arms, and Sam and Tom were fussing at each other behind me. I remember how tall she was and feeling more than a little intimidated.

Another couple invited us to join one of the small fellowship groups at Park View that met weekly in homes for Bible study, personal sharing, and prayer. The group included Ruth, and at our very first meeting she and I got into an argument. She said something about Billy Graham's support for the Vietnam War negating his Christian witness, and I challenged her. She disputed my point, and I disagreed with what she said. We went back and forth for several minutes without coming to agreement, and then she smiled and said, "I haven't had such a good time since Grant died!"

We were friends after that. In 1976 she was one of a small number of people I consulted about enrolling in the Master of Divinity program at Eastern Mennonite Seminary, and when I felt oppressed by the misogynist attitudes rampant at the seminary in those days, she encouraged me to continue my studies. In turn, I encouraged her to send her talks to the church press for publication.



We began to meet weekly for breakfast, and over a restaurant meal we would, as she phrased it, "settle all the problems of the church and the world."

Our children adored her. When Tom was about five years old, he drew a picture of Park View Church with a tall stick figure in a skirt standing in front of the door—Ruth Stoltzfus, of course!

For me, too, Ruth was the symbol of the Mennonite Church. I was inspired by her bold public witness and moral certitude on issues of peace and justice. Her courage was a model for me, even when I didn't share her clarity of vision.

In those days Ruth had a full schedule of appointments, many of them involving travel. I was at home with three children, editing Park View's monthly newsletter, taking seminary classes part time, and writing stories and articles for publication. It was a natural next step in our relationship to collaborate on writing projects.

In the winter of 1978-79 Ruth was invited by the Women's Concerns Committee of Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) to compile a report on the subject of "Women in a Speaking Ministry." It was, of course, a subject close to her heart, but she hardly had time to write her talks, she said. How could she take on such an assignment? Besides, she'd rather speak than write. "Let's do it together," I suggested, and we did. The report was published by MCC in February 1980.

The same thing happened a few years later, when the denominational women's organization asked Ruth to write the 1985-86 annual devotional guide. Ruth was still recovering from cancer surgery and saving her energy for speaking appointments. But the topic WMSC proposed was compelling—the Book of Ruth as a model for women's friendships. Ruth and I could enact the

Ruth-Naomi relationship even as we collaborated on the devotional guide. Since I was in the middle of writing the Herald Press Story Bible series, it seemed natural for me to write the Bible commentary and for Ruth, with her many years of experience in speaking to women's groups, to provide the discussion questions.

These were also the years that Ruth was strengthened in her sense that she should tell the story of her public

ministry in print. Throughout her

adult life, she had kept a journal and saved copies of every letter she wrote. She put her stories of her childhood and youth into paragraph form and labeled the notebook, "Blueberries

and Briers," the working title for her autobiography. She paid a typist to transfer her writings onto the computer, and she made inquiries of the editors at Mennonite Publishing House, who expressed interest in a book of "stories of my years."

At our weekly breakfast meetings she shared several versions of accounts of her childhood, youth, and the beginning of the Heart to Heart broadcast. But the volume of material was overwhelming; she said once that her grandson Reuben had estimated that she had 8,000 pages of autobiographical material on the computer.

In 1986 our family moved to northwest Ohio, but I didn't lose contact with Ruth. We bought a house in Bluffton, just a few miles from Pandora, where Ruth had served as interim pastor from September 1982 to June 1983. I visited the parsonage where Ruth had shoveled snow, and Grace Mennonite

Church next door, where she had weathered the flag controversy. When I came back to Virginia to visit my parents, Ruth and I would meet for breakfast, and the conversation nearly always turned to the book.

Church and family responsibilities were so overwhelming, she said, that she had made a contingency plan: would I agree, that if she should die before completing the book, I would finish it, and her niece Emily would see the manuscript through publication? Of course I would.

In 1994 Dick and I moved to Lancaster County, Pa., and Ruth and I set up a schedule to meet regularly to work on the book. About once a month I would drive south down Interstate 81 and she would drive north, and we would meet at a Mennonite restaurant in Maryland. It soon became apparent that she wasn't making progress, and driving that far on the interstate was becoming increasingly difficult for her. In the summer of 1998 Ruth's children encouraged her to turn the project over to me for completion, pointing out how much she would enjoy seeing the final publication.

I was glad to help as a labor of love, but Ruth insisted on paying my expenses and an hourly rate based on what I was paid by Mennonite Church General Board as editor of *Voice*, the monthly magazine of the denominational women's organization.

How do you tell the story of a life? How do you create a narrative that communicates the truth of another person's personality and character? How do you speak in another person's voice with integrity?

The first step was for Ruth to turn over her notebooks to me, and then her son Eugene put on a Zip disk the 8,000 pages of journal notes and letters Ruth had selected as the raw material for the book. I arranged the

stories into chapters and subchapters and the sentences into paragraphs. But the record on Eugene's Zip left gaps. Ruth's memory was failing. How could I create a narrative when I didn't know what had been left out?

Ruth readily agreed to give me access to whatever I needed, and I drove to Harrisonburg and filled up the trunk and back seat of my Honda with journals, notebooks, newsletters, and boxes of family papers. I assured her that sensitive family material would not be made public, but explained again that I needed more information than what was on the computer or even what would finally be published.

The missing pieces began to fall into place. Letters to Frances Dean Strickland filled out the picture of Ruth the teenage missionary and Ruth the young bride. Newsletters from the Civilian Public Service camp displayed unexpected playfulness. The Heart to Heart newsletter gave me a sense of the community that produced and listened to the broadcast.

The hardest part was deciding what to leave out, especially in the later chapters, because Ruth had so much documentation on her pastorates and ordination. How could I do justice to the story without wearying the reader? How could I keep the narrative energy flowing without omitting significant details? And which details were significant? Ruth's own long-windedness was the subject of more than one family story.

In one of the boxes of family letters and keepsakes I found a copy of her father's story about his parents, told in verse as well as prose. Like many others, I was enchanted by the drama and pathos of grandmother Susanna losing and then finding grandfather Henry. That tale not only helped form Ruth's sense of family and self, it has become part of the larger Mennonite

community's heritage, having been retold in several collections of stories and on stage by Ruth's daughter Helen.

Like her father, Ruth broke into verse when she was deeply moved, and so I decided to include the full text of several of her poems, even the long "Personal Psalm of Praise, Petition, and Commitment."

The rationale for including Helen's story of her father's death was different. Helen's account described Grant's personality more vividly than anything I found in Ruth's journals or heard from her in conversation, and Ruth's story seemed incomplete without it.

Ruth's strong personality and vision of her life and mission were in place early. I looked for doubt and reflection, and found unwavering focus. As she makes clear in her preface, Ruth's self-understanding was of a woman on a journey, a pilgrim overcoming obstacles in order to fulfill the destiny the Lord had prepared for her. That sense of purpose kept her from self-doubt when others questioned her breaking out of the traditional woman's role that confined her spirit.

The pain in her life came from the sense of failure when her family didn't match the idealized picture she described of her childhood home, an ideal she taught others to strive for. It was easier for her to talk about Allen's agnosticism than about Grant's depression. She wasn't reflective, but her spiritual integrity led her to an honesty about herself that I found endearing. Christian humility leavened family pride.

Her faith in the Lord never wavered. When I visited her in the hospital in Charlottesville after her surgery for colon cancer, I found her lying flat on her back, speaking about her hope for a reunion in heaven with her departed dear ones, and her confidence in her Savior.

Ruth was never girlish; she was always a lady. She had beautiful Southern manners, rooted in a genuine concern for other people. Even when she was in conflict with another person's position on an issue, she never failed in graciousness, never made her criticism personal. It was a source of pride and comfort to her that people in Pandora who differed from her about displaying the flag in church accepted her as their pastor.

She was a loyal friend, generous in praise and quick to share credit. Years after she had a photographer take pictures of our son Tom to update her family life newspaper ads, she would send him a dollar bill as a "modeling fee" every time she used one of the photos. She charged way below market price for the apartments she rented to students. Her pleasure was in helping people, befriending international students, serving her God by serving others.

There are missing pieces. The written record does not communicate the sense of fun we had over those breakfast conversations. The careful record of accounts received and sermons preached doesn't tell the full story of debts forgiven, hospitality extended, prayers uttered for friends and strangers, and the sheer personal force of that unique and extraordinary woman, my friend Ruth.



Eve MacMaster is the author of the ten-volume *Story Bible Series*, published by Herald Press, and a former editor of *Voice*, the monthly magazine of the WMSC. She has taught in Turkey, at Eastern Mennonite University, James Madison University, and at Bluffton College. Currently she serves as pastor of Emmanuel Mennonite Church, Gainesville, Fla.

# Philadelphia Conference

## Celebrates Many Stories, One Kingdom

by Laurie L. Oswald and John E. Sharp  
Photos by Laurie L. Oswald



**"Philadelphia Stories: Kingdom Building in the City," April 3-5, 2003, was sponsored by the Mennonite Church USA Historical Committee and the Mennonite and Brethren in Christ churches in the city.**

**G**oals of the conference included reflecting on the history of the Mennonite presence in Philadelphia and examining any barriers that exist between races and peoples in order to build new bridges. Tuyen Nguyen and Nate Yoder co-chaired the thirteen-person planning committee that shaped the conference. Nguyen is a research scientist and leader in the Vietnamese Mennonite Churches in Philadelphia and Wilmington, Del. Yoder is the outgoing Historical Committee chair and assistant professor of church history at Eastern Mennonite Seminary, Harrisonburg, Va.

Through storytelling and academic presentations, the planners wanted to create a setting where some of the hurt and pain from the past on such issues as racism or gender discrimination could be shared. They also wanted to provide pastoral sensitivity for any journey toward healing and reconciliation. While such a journey could not be completed in three days, the planners hoped that perhaps some tiny steps could be taken.

The photo essay that follows provides snapshots of various segments of the conference.



Leonard Dow (left), senior pastor at the multiracial Oxford Circle Mennonite Church in northeast Philadelphia, challenged the conference participants to examine

whether racism lived in their hearts and to work toward reconciliation. The multiracial Anabaptist community in Philadelphia—including twenty-two churches representing twelve ethnic groups—brings the promise of a new Christ-centered community but also the pain of timeworn racism, he said. Paraphrasing the question asked about Jesus, Dow asked, “Can anything good come out of Philadelphia? I believe the answer is Yes, come and see. Not because of who we are, but because of who Jesus is.”

Miriam Stoltzfus (right, in photo to the right), a member of Diamond Street and a longtime church worker

with her late husband, Luke Stoltzfus, shared about the contributions of many single Anglo women. Lancaster Mennonite Conference sent many such women to serve in the city.

Stoltzfus’s storytelling led into a main presentation by Lilly Lee (left, in photo below), who spoke about the barriers of women to using their gifts in the church. Lee serves on the pastoral team at the Abundant Life Chinese Mennonite Church and teaches mathematics at the Community College of Philadelphia. She spoke on “Sister Workers and Center Women Build the Church.”

She shared insights from biblical exegesis regarding women’s roles. These findings are in her book, written in Chinese, *Passion for Fullness: Examining the Woman’s Identity Roles from Biblical, Historical and Sociological Perspectives*. She made a case for recognizing and using the gifts of women in all places, including pastoral roles and places of authority.

“We don’t want to stop with encouraging ‘center’ women, but we also want to make space for women in pastoral roles in the church,” Lee said. “Like men, women were created in God’s image.... They are equally blessed, gifted, called and sent.”



Beth Graybill and Kim Schmidt described "center women" as women who provided behind-the-scenes leadership and organization in nearly every congregation during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Graybill and Schmidt were members of the planning committee and leaders of a seminar on "Recognizing Gendered Leadership: Anabaptist Women's Stories."



Jeff Gingerich (*above*), doctoral candidate at the University of Pennsylvania and assistant professor of sociology at Bluffton (Ohio) College, shared a view of the past in "Mennonites in Philadelphia: Building an Urban Anabaptist Identity." Mennonites first came to Philadelphia in 1683 and founded the Germantown Mennonite Church—the oldest Mennonite congregation in the United States. Since then the community has grown to include many other ethnic groups. They include English, Spanish, African-American, Ethiopian, Filipino, Chinese, Palestinian, Asian Indian, Indonesian, Vietnamese and Cambodian.

Gingerich described the various stages of interracial assumptions of Mennonites, from an assumed segregation in the 1930s and 1940s, to a "color blind" approach in the 1950s, to a culturally pluralistic point of view in the 1960s, to globalization in the 1990s. Finally, he referred to the rhetoric of a "new kingdom" to describe the current multicultural membership of the Philadelphia congregations that will act as a model for other U.S. denominations.

Barbara Moses (*right*), dynamic principal of the Philadelphia Mennonite High School, now in its sixth year of operation, shared her story as a "center woman," and introduced the school's choir (*below*).



The spirited singing of the Philadelphia Mennonite High School choir delighted and inspired the audience.

Tuyen Nguyen (*right*), co-chair of the planning committee, a research scientist and leader in the Vietnamese Mennonite Church in Philadelphia and in Wilmington, Del., spoke on "Phases of Christian Identity: Immigrants and Ethnicity." He identified the challenges of calling and training leaders among the first generation of immigrants who are primarily concerned about survival in a new land.

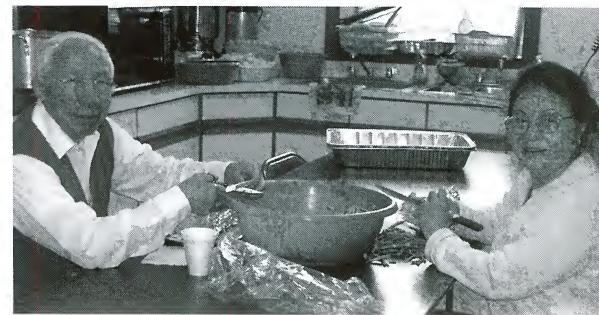


Siblings, Raymond Jackson, a former Mennonite pastor, and Mattie Cooper



Niekema, a Diamond Street "center woman," (*bottom center photo*) both shared their stories. In 1951, when two women in dark cape dresses and white head coverings came to Nikiema's door to invite her African-American family to Diamond Street Mennonite Church, she had no idea she'd one day wear the same.

When Nikiema was twelve years old, the family began attending Diamond Street. That's where she donned the conservative dress, got involved in youth group and taught Sunday school. She became a member of Diamond Street when she was 14 years old. She is still a member today at 65. Jackson and Niekema are pictured with Miriam Stoltzfus.



Quang Xuan and Tam Tran, pastor of the Vietnamese Mennonite Church, and his wife (*above*) graciously hosted the conference. With the conference in session, the Trans played the part of the biblical Martha by preparing food. The Vietnamese church, with a multitude of ministries, is located on 63<sup>rd</sup> Street and Woodland Avenue in southwest Philadelphia.

Pat McFarlane (*top-of-page-8 photo, right*) moderated a story-sharing circle of five "center women" from local congregations. Left to right are Hattie Minnis of Second Mennonite Church, Barbara Miller of Diamond Street, and Geraldine Abraham of Second Mennonite. McFarlane and Linda Christopel, both of Goshen, Ind., have



initiated the Mennonite Women of Color Oral History Project to record and publish the stories of fifty or more women across the United States.



Nicolas Angustia (*above, left*), one of three bishops in New York City, moved his seminar audience with accounts of his ministry in Brooklyn. Fred Kauffman (*right*), pastor of the West Philadelphia Mennonite Church, translated Angustia's Spanish presentation into English.



John L. Ruth (*above*), noted historian of Harleysville, Pa., in a seminar, described "Philadelphia's Influence on Pennsylvania German Mennonites. "For nearly two centuries southeastern

Pennsylvania Mennonites saw 'die stadt' (the city) as the center of government, economy and worldly culture. In the nineteenth century two congregations were founded in Philadelphia, and half a century later mission work was begun. Essentially, these efforts did not survive. In the twentieth century, however, new developments such as a huge wave of immigration from the American South and foreign countries has changed the nature of the city, which has seen the birth of congregations of multiple ethnicity. Culturally, it is no longer 'foreign' territory."

Lemuel So, pastor of the Love Truth Chinese Mennonite Church (*below, left*), and Freeman Miller led a workshop, "Pastoring Through Generational Transitions." Miller also gave the final address of the conference, "Thy Kingdom Come: Resources and Challenges for Urban Anabaptists." He said the Mennonite



and Brethren in Christ churches in the city are striving to build a bridge between the first- and second-generation Mennonite churches and to revive the Anabaptist vision for the twentieth-century urban environment.

He asked, "Are we giving our youth something they can live and die for? Our urban youth may not like shoo-fly pie, but the one thing that grabs young and old alike is the original Anabaptist vision of following Jesus as Lord in all areas of life, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. This is still a compelling vision for urban Anabaptists today.

"We no longer plow the ground and milk the cows, but we have become many kinds of professionals in the city. And we need to find new ways of engaging the city as salt and light and yeast. ... As we exercise our citizenship of the New Jerusalem in old Philadelphia, a dynamic new community of shalom will rise up."

Joe Manickam (*below, right*), associate executive director and staff associate for Asian Ministries at the Center for Anabaptist Leadership, Los Angeles, Calif., makes a point in the closing session of the conference. Seated with him on the panel are Barbara Moses and Freeman Miller, who gave the closing address. ☰



# 2003 John Horsch Essay



Aram DiGennaro



James Regier



Jon Meyer

## Contest Results

The results of the 2003 John Horsch Mennonite History Essay Contest were announced by John E. Sharp, director of the Mennonite Church USA Historical Committee. Fourteen students in three academic levels submitted papers on various topics in Mennonite studies. The winners are as follows:

**Class I – Seminary and Graduate School:** First, Aram DiGennaro, Eastern Mennonite Seminary, Harrisonburg, Virginia, *Christ at the Center: The Concept of Discipleship in the Writings of Desiderius Erasmus and Balthasar Hubmaier*; Second, Rickard L. Eby, Eastern Mennonite University – Lancaster (Pa.) Branch, *The role of temperament in the 1847 Mennonite Church split and its applications for today's church*.

**Class II – Undergraduate College and University:** First, James Regier, Bethel College, North Newton, Kansas, *Mennonitische Vergangenheitsbewältigung: Prussian Mennonites, the Third Reich, and Coming to Terms with a Difficult Past*; Second, Brett Klingenberg, Bethel College, North Newton, Kansas, *Balancing Tradition and Culture: Moundridge Mennonites during World War One*; Third, Paul Yoder, Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, Virginia, *Virginia Mennonites and the Question of Race: A History of Trial and Progress*.

**Class III – High School:** First, Jon Meyer, Bethany Christian High School, Goshen, Indiana, *Conversation at Puidoux: Mennonites Rethink Church and State*; Second (tie), Isaac Beachy, Eastern Mennonite High School, Harrisonburg,

Virginia, *George Blaurock: Quite the Man* and Sara Hershberger, Eastern Mennonite High School, Harrisonburg, Virginia, *How Shall We Serve?: Pacifist Nursing During World War II*; Third, Ashley Bontrager, Bethany Christian High School, Goshen, Indiana, *CPS: Mennonites Serve Both God and Country*.

In each class first place winners are awarded \$100, second place, \$75 and third place \$50. First place winners also receive a one-year subscription to the *Mennonite Quarterly Review*. All entrants receive a one-year subscription to the *Mennonite Historical Bulletin*.

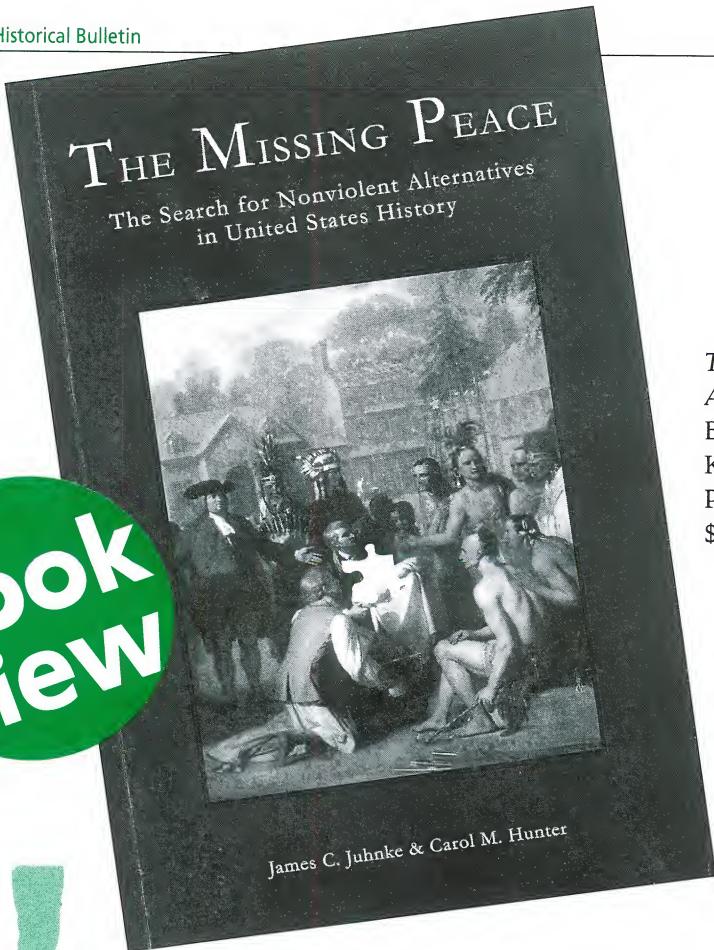
Winning papers will be posted on the Historical Committee web site: [www.mcusa-archives.org](http://www.mcusa-archives.org).

This year's entries were judged by Perry Bush, Professor of History, Bluffton College, Bluffton, Ohio; Leonard Gross, Goshen, Indiana, member of College Mennonite Church, retired Executive Director of the Archives of the Mennonite Church; and Mark Metzler Sawin, Assistant Professor of History, Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, Virginia.

The annual contest is sponsored by Mennonite Church USA Historical Committee, Goshen, Indiana, and is named in honor of John Horsch (1867-1941), the German-American Mennonite historian and polemicist who did much to reawaken interest in Anabaptist and Mennonite studies in the twentieth century. The deadline for submission of entries for next year's contest is June 15, 2004.

**Next year's  
John Horsch  
Mennonite History  
Essay Contest  
submission  
deadline is  
June 15, 2004.**

# Book Review



*The Missing Peace: The Search for Nonviolent Alternatives in United States History.*

By James C. Juhnke and Carol M. Hunter.  
Kitchener, Ont., and Scottdale, Pa.: Pandora  
Press and Herald Press. 2001. 321 pp.  
\$26.50 (US); \$37.50 (Can.).

If the sweep of United States history surveyed in this timely, provocative book fails to persuade you that our nation is in thrall, both domestically and abroad, to the “myth of redemptive violence,” then consider for a moment the war carried out earlier this year by the United States (and Britain) in Iraq.

The military campaign against the regime of Saddam Hussein was waged in the face of significant public opposition in polls and in the streets, both at home and overseas. It was waged despite opposition from other governments in the United Nations Security Council. It was waged despite numerous pleas to give weapons inspections more time. In the end, the Bush chose to declare that time had expired for diplomatic solutions short of war. Had it ever believed in non-military alternatives in the first place? Not likely. Under the banner of Operation Iraqi Freedom, the American military juggernaut was unleashed. In short order it toppled one of the three “axis of evil” regimes identified by President Bush a year earlier.

While the story does not stop here, of course, the telling of this most recent episode can. Now, substitute different dates, geographical references, enemies, and names of our political leaders, and

leave out any persons who questioned or rejected violence as a means to secure freedom or settle international disputes. You will have the history of the United States as it has been recorded and celebrated from colonial times to the present. This is the contention of James Juhnke and Carol Hunter, historians from Christian liberal arts colleges affiliated with historic peace churches: Juhnke of Bethel (Kans.) College; and Hunter of Earlham College in Indiana.

If war is the locomotive of history, as Trotsky once claimed, in *The Missing Peace* they clearly hope to derail the engine and rip up the track. Or, failing that, Juhnke and Hunter at least intend to give a voice to courageous persons who have dissented from, and called for alternatives to, this master narrative and public policy template. Their goal is to survey the course of American history from the viewpoint of “peace values” as well as from a global, non-nationalistic perspective.

The authors have borrowed their key interpretive concept from biblical scholar Walter Wink: the “myth of redemptive violence,” which sees in violence the most effective way to secure American (or any other nation’s) freedom, and which is embedded in a larger “domination system” going

back to Babylonian creation myths. In opposition to this perspective, Juhnke and Hunter aim to celebrate “what makes for a peaceful and just society for all the citizens of the world.” They take up their task guided by three convictions. First, “violence in the United States has done more harm than good, often escalating rather than diminishing violence”; in other words, they reject violence on strictly utilitarian grounds. Second, history must be viewed through a lens of “mutuality and interdependence rather than of self-willed triumph”; this means that there is no room for a national-interest perspective in interpreting history. Third, “by remembering those people and events who worked for nonviolent alternatives, but whose stories are often missing from traditional texts,” their study will “provide hope and encouragement for a less violent future.”

In addition to bringing neglected voices such as Native American peacemaking traditions and republican peace experiments of the early nineteenth century into their story, Juhnke and Hunter read American history with “what if?” questions in mind. This approach, also known as “counterfactual” or “conditional” history, rejects the notion that history is limited to the study of what did happen; the road not taken, this approach contends, belongs on the historical map as well. If other policies had been followed, or if those who were working for peace and justice in this situation—Juhnke and Hunter seem quite confident that they can identify them—had been heeded, might war have been avoided, while still producing more or less the same outcomes? Interestingly, Juhnke and Hunter seem not so much in disagreement with the political ends that were pursued—perhaps with the exception of maintaining the unity of the American republic in the mid-nineteenth century—as they are with the means used to pursue them. These violent means, they argue, succeeded only in

undermining rather than achieving the goals for which Americans strived.

So, the question that Juhnke and Hunter want to wrestle with is not why American history has taken a consistently violent course; for them the myth of redemptive violence clearly is the chief, maybe only, culprit. Rather, they want to ask, did it really have to happen this way? Was, for example, a war really necessary to win American independence from Britain? Was a war really necessary to abolish slavery in the United States? Was World War I really the great progressive crusade to make the world safe for democracy that President Wilson portrayed it as? Was World War II really the “good war” it is usually remembered to be? Did the Cold War really need to descend into a costly and fear-ridden military competition between the U.S. and the Soviet Union? Not surprisingly, given their basic conviction that violence never works and their rather uncritical appeal to all manner of peace advocates all along the way, their answer to each one of these questions is negative. Things could have gone otherwise, they maintain, for reasons that they explain at length and which all but the most hard-core historical determinist will find plausible.

To another set of questions Juhnke and Hunter bring either positive or “maybe” answers. For example, would it have been better if the southern states had been allowed to secede in peace, as some northerners were arguing in 1860? Did the Civil War profoundly corrupt postwar relationships between the races and between regions? Could the United States have retreated to its own hemisphere around 1940, protected by the Atlantic and Pacific oceans, and left Germany to dominate Europe and Japan East Asia? Did the nonviolent civil rights movement led by Martin Luther King, Jr., challenge the country to live up to its ideals of freedom, democracy, and equality?

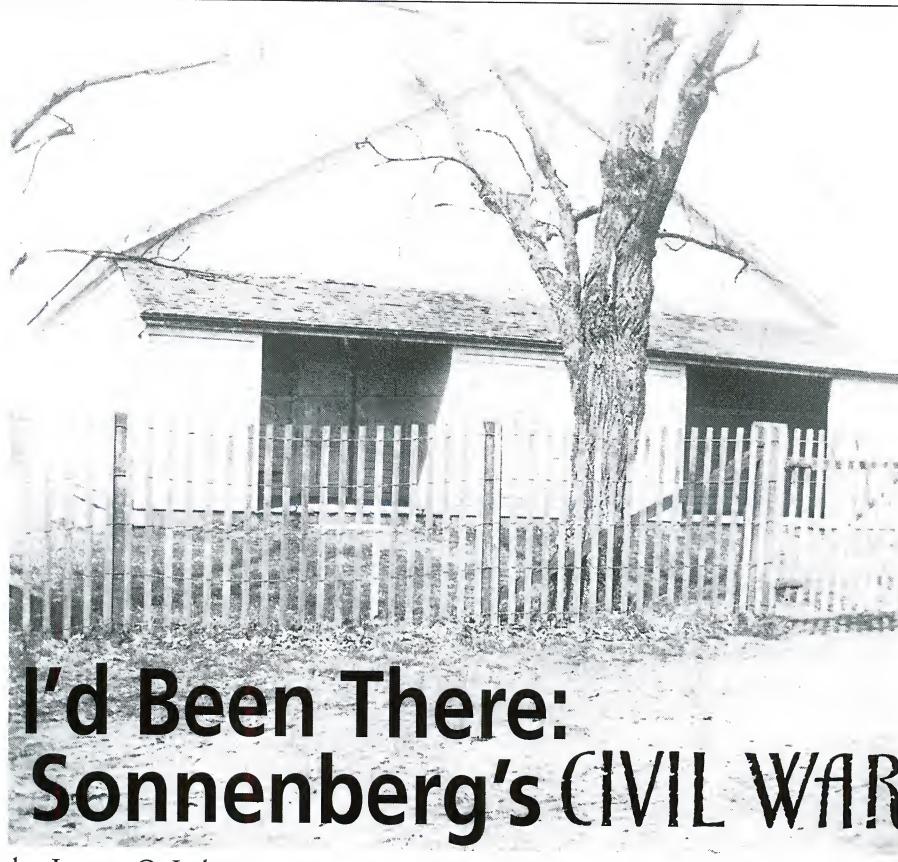
Do some formulations of gender tend toward greater peace and justice, while others usually lead to violence and justice? Again they advance thoughtful arguments worthy of consideration and show that no historical issue is an open-and-shut case.

*The Missing Peace* thus succeeds quite admirably in bringing the “what if” questions to the study of American history—even if it does not always explore the likely consequences of these alternatives as thoroughly as one might wish. For this reason alone this book is well worth reading and pondering.

Does it, however, attain its goal of providing hope and encouragement for a less violent future, of helping its readers overcome cynicism and disillusion about an America addicted to the myth of redemptive violence? Here I am less sure—even if the recent war against Iraq had been averted by advocates of nonviolent policies such as the ones studied in these pages. Such a lofty goal is, I think, beyond the ability of any study of political and social history—religious history may be different—to achieve fully. Its results will often vex and weary, even if occasional flickers of hope and encouragement appear, as they do here. Yet peace proponents never seem to gain the upper hand, or maintain it for very long. Why is this? Is it that they are never given a serious hearing and thus never enter the public record? Or do they simply fail to make a persuasive practical case, to enough of their contemporaries to influence the course of national policy, that violence *always* does more harm than good, and thus are marginalized?

That the authors do not entirely succeed is not entirely surprising given their understanding of peace as “both personal and communal; local and universal; spiritual and political” (p. 13). This broad, idealistic definition

*Continued on page 13...*



# I Wish I'd Been There: Sonnenberg's CIVIL WAR Petition

by James O. Lehman

The American Civil War was all fired up and going strong. Now, in the summer of 1862, government officials began to threaten a draft to get more men. At the Sonnenberg Mennonite Church in eastern Wayne County, Ohio, which was made up of Swiss emigrants from only twenty-five to thirty-five years earlier, real alarm arose. The large congregation became so worried that on Wednesday, August 6, a special meeting was called to expressly consider "the present sad state of the Country, and to deliberate upon the duties of all good and Loyal Citizens."

Out of that meeting arose a fine petition, most likely drafted by Ulrich Welty, a schoolteacher who knew English well in this very Swiss/German church. The petition, with the names of the two bishops at the end, was sent to David Tod, governor of Ohio. It is now located in the Ohio Historical Society Library and Archives at Columbus. It was a very clear statement of Mennonite thinking of that era. It informed the governor that for two or three centuries "our ancestors" were persecuted by governments of different European countries because of our belief that it is wrong to "make war against our fellowmen under all circumstances." However,

we know that in this country we have enjoyed religious liberty "unlimited and unmolested." We know it is our duty to support the government in all things which do not conflict with our confession of faith. Thus we offer thanks for our liberties, but we "condemn all rebellion and insurrection" against our government. We also know that we "owe tribute to whom tribute is due" to our government. We want to obey government in every way possible except where we must obey God. To do military service "conflicts" with our beliefs.

"As a matter of conscience we cannot consent to violate our faith." Therefore, we are willing to aid the government "in contributions of money." **We will suffer the penalty of the law rather than to violate our faith ..."** In fact, we will "sacrifice property and all that we possess in case of necessity rather than to make use of the sword." We will "suffer the penalty of the law rather than to violate our faith," if only the government will be satisfied in charging us a commutation fee to excuse us from doing military service.

*Continued on page 13...*

**Sonnenberg ...cont. from page 12**

Which is exactly what happened. In the state draft that fall, Ohio levied a \$200 commutation fee to excuse people. Later federal government fees were \$300. To our knowledge not one of Sonnenberg's young men went off to war. But about three-fourths of the men of the congregation, including a minister who shortly became bishop, contributed money to the Wayne County Military Committee. More than \$1,600 was contributed.

I would have been proud (in the good Mennonite sense!) to have been in that meeting to help take a strong stand against serving in the military. Though today's outlook regarding the financing of a monstrous military machine might be different, for that time and place it was a classic statement of obeying God rather than men as they understood it at that time. 



*James O. Lehman,  
Harrisonburg, Va., is  
part-time archivist for  
the Virginia Mennonite  
Conference, and is  
writing his ninth  
congregational history,*

*this one of Grace Mennonite Church,  
Pandora, Ohio.*

**Missing Peace Book Review ...cont. from page 11**

not only is devoid of any Christian reference, but also is unlikely, under the conditions of sin-tainted human history, to be realized. No wonder such a peace is a missing peace! To explain its absence in American (or any other) history by the power of a single myth seems a little too neat and simple. Single-cause explanations such as this underestimate what it would take to tidy up the messiness and violence of history short of the eschaton. They also pay insufficient attention to the anarchic, competitive nature of the international context in which no single state—including the United States—can either take its own survival for granted or create the conditions of enduring world peace.

Is then the partial success of *The Missing Peace* a reason to despair? Once again, I think not. Historically the Mennonite commitment to peace has been Christ-centered; it has not been grounded in claims that violence never works, or that the world of nations can run without it, or that nonviolence will sort everything out if only its advocates are heeded. Rather, it has always been rooted, first, in the conviction that it is wrong for disciples of Christ to engage in violence because it runs counter to his teaching and example, and, second, in the power of his resurrection, which promises ultimate vindication though no immediate success to those who would follow him.

It is only if and when this basis for our peace—and our hope—comes up missing that our real scandal will begin. Until then, the missing peace of this world will sadden us, but will neither surprise nor discourage us.



*J. Robert Charles, Goshen, Ind. is director for Europe and project manager for research and program review at Mennonite Mission Network.*

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# Scrapbook page, Goshen

by Dennis Stoesz, Archivist



Elizabeth Showalter (born in 1907), pictured here with her first edited copy of the junior paper *Words of Cheer*, 1949, at Mennonite Publishing House, Scottdale, Pa. Her diary for 1948-51, which includes her time in Iowa and Scottdale, starts off with this prayer: "Thanks, Dear God, for the warmth of thy fellowship in 1947. Grant, I pray thee, for 1948, greater understanding of thyself, thy plans, myself, and those about me. With understanding, give me love. For thine own sake. Amen." Source: Elizabeth Showalter Collection.



Rhea Yoder (1898-1992), pictured here as a missionary to India, 1950. She served as a teacher in the Woodstock boarding school for missionary and other children in northern India for ten years. Her vacation diary to "South India" for 1950-51 begins, "December 6 through 16, With Miss Good at Balodgation. Crocheted, served, knitted, and attended Annual Business meeting at Beare's bungalow. Paul Erb and S. C. Yoder had active parts in the program. December 15 through January 15, With Jonathans at Dhamtari. Served for girls and myself." Her other diaries include: Trip, 1952-53; and Assam and Darjeeling Trip, December 1954. Source: Rhea Yoder Collection.



Elizabeth Yoder Woodiwiss (1889-1986), pictured here as an 18-year-old in 1907, at Surrey, N.D., where five families from Kishacoquillas Valley, Pa., had moved in 1903. In her 1912 diary, at Minot, N.D., she wrote: "Thursday June 27. A very warm day. It was almost impossible to keep comfortable in church. S. S. [Sunday School] Conference was very good. Church was pretty well filled. Quite a few visitors attended. Some from the Brethren church and some Nazarenes also some Norwegian Lutherans." Source: Elizabeth Yoder Woodiwiss Collection.

(Background) A page from the 1907 diary of Agnes Albrecht (1888-1963), Peoria, Ill., at the age of 19. Source: Agnes Albrecht Gunden Collection.

Vesta Zook (1891-1973),

Constantinople, Turkey, 1921-22 (left) and Vinora Weaver (right), Mennonite relief workers. Zook begins her 1921 ocean diary on March 29<sup>th</sup> when she and Weaver board the ship at the New York harbor. On April 16<sup>th</sup> her entry reads "Enter Constantinople harbor about 7 o'clock Anchor for the night. The city presents a beautiful sight at night. The mosques and minarets are wonderful." Source: Vesta (Zook) Slagel Collection.

source for much of the information on this page is Anne Yoder, "A Guide to Mennonite Women's Diaries, 1850-1950," in *Mennonite Quarterly Review* (October 1996, pages 483-495). This article provides a good introduction to women's diaries, and a list of some of the diaries by women found in the Mennonite archives at Harrisonburg, Va.; Lancaster, Pa.; Harleysville, Pa.; Goshen, Ind.; and Metamora, Ill.

# Scrapbook page, North Newton

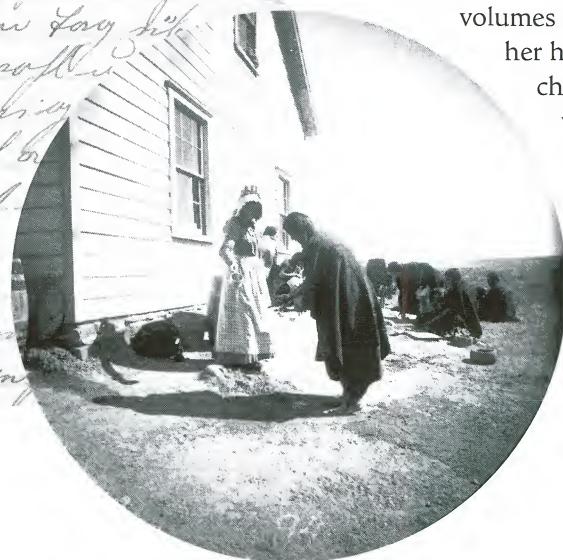
by John D. Thiesen, Archivist



*1. first 1894  
January  
1. Herrn und Frau grösste Führung haben  
mit Freude erfreut mich nun mit sehr lebhaften  
Singen. Ich sei nicht sofort. Herrn und  
Frau Mayenne General Hopi, von  
Brüder ihres Tochters im Dorf. Von den  
noch etwas abseitigen für mich. Von Freuden  
noch mehr als die Brüder bei Russell's in  
febr. nach dem gallapu. Mr. May hieß  
wurde obend am Mittwoch Abend.  
Blatt wird von der Mutter sehr bewogen.  
2. Herrn und Frau am Ende der Tag ist.  
Dort sieht oben Grindel wohl  
nach dem Pferd im Dorf mit  
denen sie waren. Sie pfand es  
aber. Als dann erneut gespielt  
hat Blatt Grindel bald.  
3. Herrn und Frau von plötzlich  
durch die Mutter zu mir.*



Helene Wiebe Zimmermann, born 1822 in the Danzig/Gdansk, Poland, region. Married Ludwig E. Zimmermann in 1857. They migrated to Beatrice, Nebraska, in the 1870s, where she died in January 1886. Her diaries, from the 1850s and 1860s, are somewhat fragmentary. Her husband, again, was a champion diary recorder, with volumes running from 1852 into the late 1880s.



Martha Voth running a "sewing school" for Hopi women, summer 1894.



Maria Becker Warkentin (above, left) born in 1867 in Russia and died in 1943 in Minnesota, shown with her husband Dietrich Warkentin (1866-1951) in 1903 in Mountain Lake, Minnesota. This mother and daughter kept diaries beginning with Maria in 1905 to her death in 1943 and continued by Anna into 1977. All entries are in German through 1955 and in English from 1956 through 1977.

Anna Warkentin (above, right) as a Bethel College student in 1930. She was born in 1892 in Minnesota and died in 1977 there. She remained single.



## On site at Atlanta 2003

The Historical Committee was an active part of Atlanta 2003, the Mennonite Church USA Assembly, Georgia World Congress Center, Atlanta, Georgia, July 3-8.

In addition to sponsoring a dinner featuring the Philadelphia Stories conference, the director led two seminars—*Gathering at the Hearth to Tell Our Story*, and “Humor Is a Saving Thing After All”: *Stories of Humor, Faith and Humility*. The second seminar, presented in tandem with well-known humorist Jep Hostetler and offered to youth and adults, was very well attended. It seems humor has become a valued commodity these days. And I suspect this was one of the less demanding seminars for youth—an easy way to make the required quota of seminars!

The Historical Committee also sponsored a coordinated exhibit with eight regional historical societies and interpretive centers. The participating organizations were: Amish and Mennonite Heritage Center, Berlin, Ohio; Kauffman Museum, North Newton, Kan.; Martyr's Mirror Trust, North Newton, Kan.; Menno-Hof, Shipshewana, Ind.; Mennonite Heritage Center, Harleysville, Pa.; Mennonite Historical Society,

Goshen, Ind.; Mennonite Library and Archives, North Newton, Kan.; and Valley Brethren Mennonite Heritage Center, Harrisonburg, Va.

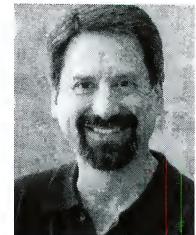
This attractive exhibit was designed and built by Chuck Regier, curator of exhibits, Kauffman Museum. We anticipate that additional organizations will participate in a similar exhibit at Charlotte 2005, the next Mennonite Church USA Assembly.

We continue to value our link to interpretive centers and regional heritage organizations, even as we seek to serve the denomination. We are all about the business of “Minding Mennonite Memory.” Our mission statement is ever before us:

*God calls us to preserve our heritage, interpret our faith stories, and proclaim God's work among us.*

We invite you to support our mission with your generous contributions. The challenge to expand our network of support continues to grow. Nurturing and expanding that network will require much of my energy in the coming months. You can make it easier by being generous with your contributions! And thank you!

—John E. Sharp, editor



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### Mennonite Historical Bulletin

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